

**FAMILY MEDIATION CANADA**

**2015 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES  
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2015**

**12:30 P.M. (Pacific Time)**

**The Morris J Wosk Centre for Dialogue  
Simon Fraser University (320 Strategy Room)  
580 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 1L6**

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**Present:** 22 Members Present

**FMC Board of Directors Present (10/12):**

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)
Frank Bulger	(PE)

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

**Regrets:**

Keith Wallis	(NS)
Elizabeth S. Reagh Q.C.	(PE)

- 1. The meeting was called to order at 12:35 P.M. Pacific Time.**
- 2. Acceptance of Agenda – Lia Versaevel 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 Brenda Arseneault seconded. The minutes were adopted as presented.**

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

The 2015-2016 FMC Board Nomination Slate was read and presented as follows:

Name	Province	Status	Position	Term	Term ending
Brenda Arseneault	AB	Elected	Director	2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2016
Vacant	AB	Appointed AFMS	Director	1 <sup>st</sup> term 2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2017 2019
Kathleen Bellamano	BC	Elected	Director	1 <sup>st</sup> term 2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2017 2019
Lia Versaevel	BC	Elected	President Elect President Past President Director		2015 2017 2019 2021
Eleanor Moore	MB	Appointed FMM	Director	1 <sup>st</sup> term 2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2017 2019
Vacant	MB	Elected	Director	1 <sup>st</sup> term 2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2017 2019
Vacant	NB	Elected		1 <sup>st</sup> term 2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2017 2019
Judy McCann-Beranger	NL	Elected	Director	2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2017
Vacant	NS	Appointed FMNS	Director	1 <sup>st</sup> term 2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2017 2019
Keith Wallis	NS	Elected	Incumbent Director	3 <sup>rd</sup> term	2017
Vacant	NU	Elected	Director	1 <sup>st</sup> term 2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2017 2019
Vacant	NT	Elected		1 <sup>st</sup> term 2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2017 2019
Ernie Tannis	ON		Honorary Counsel		
Julie Gill	ON	Elected	Director	1 <sup>st</sup> term 2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2017 2019
Vacant	ON	Appointed OAFM	Director	1 <sup>st</sup> term 2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2017 2019
Tom Dart	ON	Elected	Past President Director	2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2017 2019
Tamara Bodnaruk-Wide	ON	Elected	Treasurer President Elect President Past President	1 <sup>st</sup> term	2015 2017 2019 2021

			Director		2023
Frank Bulger	PE	Appointed Mediation PEI	Director	1 <sup>st</sup> term 2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2016 2018
Vacant	PE	Elected	Director	1 <sup>st</sup> term 2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2017 2019
Eric Skoglund	NL	Appointed Certificati on Committee			2016
Judy McCann-Beranger	NL	Appointed Elder Mediation Committee			2016
Mary Damianakis	QC	Elected	Director	2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2017
Gerald Schoel	QC	Appointed AFMQ	Incumbent Director	3 <sup>rd</sup> Term	2017
Vacant	SK	Appointed CRS	Director	1 <sup>st</sup> term 2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2017 2019
Vacant	SK	Elected	Director	1 <sup>st</sup> term 2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2017 2019
Vacant	YK	Elected	Director	1 <sup>st</sup> term 2 <sup>nd</sup> term	2017 2019
Vacant			Secretary		

**Gerry Schoel moved that the election of directors be accepted as read and Mary Damianakis seconded. All in favour, No-one opposed, So Passed.**

## 5. Reports

### a) President's Report – Tom Dart

As my term as President expires in November this year, I can't help but reflect on the ups and downs of my term of office. I am very glad to report that the ups far outdo the downs. First the "ups". We are presenting very well deserved FAMMA Awards to some very special people this year in several categories. It is wonderful to recognize people who have made such valuable contributions. Their names will be revealed at our reception.

The dedication of our Board of Directors continues to inspire me. We, as members of FMC, are so fortunate to have the volunteers we have. Everyone pitches in and everyone works so hard to ensure that our standards are maintained, our budget secured and services provided to the public and to our members in a professional manner.

Last year, for our AGM, we travelled to St. John's Newfoundland where our members were treated to a wonderful presentation on child support issues and how to mediate them by Betty Ife and Linda Bonnell, two past presidents. We enjoyed the wonderful hospitality of Judy McCann-Beranger and her husband, Greg who welcomed us into their home and then entertained us for an entire evening – true Newfoundland welcome for us. Judy was also instrumental in making the conference a success.

Betty Ife has done wonders in pulling together the conference in Vancouver recognizing our thirtieth anniversary. We are looking forward to this event.

We finalized our new by-laws last year at our AGM in time for full compliance with the federal legislation governing not for profits.

As reported last year, FMC is also involved with a new Ontario group, Family Dispute Resolution Institute of Ontario (FDRIO). We have attended meetings to learn more about this group. Through our joint efforts, Ontario has proclaimed the week of Monday November 23<sup>rd</sup> as “Family Dispute Resolution Week”. FMC is fully in support of the week and is supporting programs which will take place throughout the province. Many municipalities have joined in and proclaimed the week as well. Events will take place in those municipalities. FMC will be part of some of them.

FMC is also working in collaboration with Ontario Association for Family Mediation (OAFM), British Columbia and Alberta in working toward court reform. As your President, I am sitting on committees in Ontario designed to promote court reform, reform promoting peaceful conflict resolution.

In August this year, I was invited to make a presentation on family mediation to the Conciliation and Arbitration Board, a not for profit group of volunteers who provide high quality dispute resolution services for the Ismaili community throughout Canada. I hope FMC will work with CAB to gain a better understanding of how we can all collaborate and learn from each other. Peaceful conflict resolution is the goal of both our association and CAB. We have promised to share ideas and statistics so we can learn what works and what does not work in family mediation.

Before our AGM in November, the Board will meet in a retreat facilitated by Linda Bonnell whom you all know. We intend to discuss many topics of concern to our members and to the Board. This will be a committed working group. We intend to create a work plan and follow through on what we know will be many good ideas as to how to expand our membership, expand the public's access to family mediation services thereby benefitting the public and our membership. Only really one “down”: We are losing two very strong Board members in Betty Ife and Elizabeth Reagh. We are very sorry to see them leave us. It will be very hard to replace them.

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. The work you do will be of benefit to mediators across Canada.

In conclusion, I wish to give a warm welcome to our incoming President, Lia Versaevel. Lia has many great ideas and will strive hard to make our organization more vibrant and more visible. I also wish to say a very heartfelt thank you to those Board members who will be leaving us this year. We will truly miss them at the Board level. We know though that they will continue their support and continue to be around if we need to draw on their experience.

**b) Operations Manager's Report - Carrie Cekerevac**

I would like to start by wishing FMC a Happy 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. I am honoured that I have been an employee with FMC for 13 of those 30 years. I started as an Executive Assistant & Membership Services Coordinator and over the years my role has evolved to managing all operational aspects of the organization.

I would like to thank the membership and board of directors of FMC for the opportunity to serve as your Operations Manager. I am proud to witness the ongoing achievements that FMC accomplishes and the initiatives that FMC continues to undertake to improve the field of family mediation and our organization.

FMC's marketing efforts this year to gain new members and retain lapsed members have resulted in revenue of \$4,750.00 for the organization.

FMC continues to send out "News & Happenings", an email that informs our Members, about the news & training opportunities across the country.

I encourage our members to contact me with any suggestions for the organization that you believe FMC should focus on.

Family Mediation Canada is run by a strong board of directors and I have the privilege of working with them and the various committees who examine all relevant issues and development within their committee. You will hear from the committee chairs momentarily about this year's activities.

I would like to conclude by thanking our outgoing President, Tom Dart for his strong leadership over the last two years, I think I speak for everyone when I say that his dedication to FMC has truly inspired us all.

**c) Treasurer's Report – Tamara Bodnaruk-Wide**

I am happy to report, once again, that the 2014-2015 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. I continue to search for innovative ways to save FMC money, and to streamline practices. One example of this is that this past year, we moved all of our banking to The Royal Bank of Canada, and in so doing, we accomplished two major cost-saving measures: (1) we were able to finally secure a corporate credit card and as such save service charges on internet transfers and cheques, and make other payment processing (such as US dollar transactions) and out of province transactions much easier for our office administrator; and (2) we were able to switch our General Operating Account to one where if we keep a minimum balance, all fees are waived. Since we have been able to consistently maintain our balance in that account above \$50,000.00, and that is our primary use account, we have essentially eliminated monthly banking fees. We also now have a \$5,000.00 locked-in GIC which generates more interest than a regular account, and we can use it as collateral if necessary.

As treasurer, I continue to make 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 again entrusting me with this responsibility this past year, and look forward to continuing on in this role for the 2015-2016 fiscal year.

**i. Review of Financial Statements 2014/2015**

**The Review of the Financial Statements for 2014/2015 was presented. Tamara Bodnaruk-Wide moved we accept the Accountants report as presented and Gerry Schoel seconded. All in favour, No-one opposed, So Passed.**

**ii. Appointment of Accountants**

**It was moved by Tamara Bodnaruk-Wide and seconded by Tom Dart 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 November 4, 2015 we had a total of 139 certified members: 2 from Alberta, 112 from British Columbia, 5 from Manitoba, 1 from New Brunswick, 2 from Newfoundland, 12 from Ontario, 3 from P.E.I., 1 from Quebec, and 1 from Saskatchewan. 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.

With regard to the Elder Mediation Certification as of November 4, 2015 we had a total of 21 certified Elder Mediation members: 1 from Alberta, 1 from BC, 1 from New Brunswick, 2 from NL, 13 from Ontario and 3 from Prince Edward Island.

Over this past year the committee addressed endless queries and protocols for people seeking or renewing their certification credentials; reviewed and approved family mediation training on request and we have just completed a process of reviewing and updating all our policies and procedures. The updated Program Manual, Candidate's Manual, Trainer's Manual, and Assessor's Manual was revised and in use for more than a year.

A very special thanks to our Certification Committee for their dedication and donation of expertise and many precious hours. Thanks to our Certification Registrars, Linda Bonnell who oversees the assessment process and all it entails for the Family Relations and Comprehensive certifications and to Certification Registrar, Greg M. Beranger who oversees the assessment process for the Elder Mediation Certification.

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**

The Committee is made up of the following members:

Brenda Arseneault

Mary Daminiakis

Tom Dart

Eric Skoglund

Ernest Tannis

G. Schoel, c.o., Chair

The committee met semi regularly during the year in order to review the bylaws and internal procedures of FMC. The committee found that although the complaints procedure had been revised it was still too complicated and required an extensive revision.

Thus the committee studied the procedures in place and then rewrote the procedures to be followed and submitted the recommended draft to the Board for its review and approval. We expect that the new complaints procedures will be forwarded to all members shortly.

Due to the ongoing shortage of members who are willing to give up of their time to sit on the Board of Directors the bylaws concerning how long a member may sit on the Board of our association had to be revised. The revision was sent to all members by email in conformity with the regulations so that they could be voted on at the AGM.

The committee also advises the Board on questions concerning our bylaws and other internal and external regulations during the year.

In closing I wish to thank all of the committee members for the time they have dedicated to this committee.

**f) Public Outreach Committee Report- Brenda Arseneault**

The Public Outreach Committee would like to extend our gratitude to FMC's Operations Manager; Carrie Cekerevac for her much valued assistance, the FMC Board and committee members for their continued support and invaluable team work.

*FMC participated in some very really insightful events in the western Canada region.*

1. AFMS and ACR Including Children in the ADR process, Calgary. Presenters Jon Graham and Dr. Lorri Yasenik at a two day program on May 22nd, 2015.
2. University of Calgary Family Law Secrets Exposed Super Conference, June 25th and 26th, 2015.
3. AFMS and AFCC Parenting Coordination and Arbitration, September 11th and 12th, 2015.
4. Resolution Day in Calgary Court Centre, October 15th, 2015, Brenda Arseneault was one of the Media Contacts for the project, assisted the planning team attending meetings in Calgary. Carrie Cekerevac was also included on the meeting outcomes. Carrie Cekerevac sent us some swag for this special national resolution day.
5. Mount Royal University Faculty of Continuing Education and Extension - Brenda Arseneault attended a presentation and provided an information package to Conflict Resolution Extension Program Coordinator, Wendy McLeod on October 15th, 2015.
6. Law Resource Day in Calgary October 21st, 2015, Carrie Cekerevac shipped out some swag to hand out to the public. Stats: reached approx. 60 - 70 answered questions, provided information about mediation and gave out swag.
7. ADRIC National Conference in Calgary October 29th, and 30th, 2015. Stats: Registered attendees expected is 300. Many thanks to Carrie Cekerevac for shipping all the materials and swag for this event.

What a wonderful opportunity to place FMC front and centre at these events promoting dispute resolution to potential members and the general public.

**Committee Members:** Brenda Arseneault, Linda Bonnell, Mina Vaish, Brenda Hooper and Mary Damianakis

**g) Marketing Committee Report – Brenda Arseneault**

The Marketing Committee would like to thank FMC's Operations Manager, Carrie Cekerevac for her valued assistance, and FMC board all the committee members for their continued support and knowledge.

The board members were asked to send in to the committee any marketing materials that would assist our members in promoting their mediation practice. Much gratitude to those who

provided the committee with their favorite mediation practice tools, for sharing openly documents that they each value as great marketing materials.

The FMC board of directors approved a marketing project in which two MBA students from Wilfrid Laurier University, Ontario took an inside look at our organization using their expertise and skill set to review our current marketing policies and website. The end result we are proud to say is a workable Marketing Plan report. The Marketing Plan report was presented to FMC's board at a monthly meeting on July 15th, 2015. The Marketing Plan report will be reviewed further by the board at this year's retreat in Vancouver, British Columbia. Special thanks to Carrie Cekerevac, Mattie Mayakrishnan, and Lee Anne Nymeyer. Well done!

Brenda Arseneault provided the FMC office with materials on Marketing, Newsletters, Webinars and potential Customer Service Satisfaction Survey.

The Marketing Committee will continue working together to promote FMC using their guided principles and policies.

**Committee Members:** Keith Wallis, Karen Stewart

**h) Membership Committee Report – Brenda Arseneault**

As of November 10, 2015 FMC has a total **467** members and the total in each province is as follows:

- Alberta - **49**
- British Columbia - **193**
- Manitoba - **15**
- New Brunswick - **11**
- Newfoundland – **7**
- Nova Scotia - **13**
- Northwest Territories - **2**
- Nunavut - **2**
- Ontario - **148**
- Prince Edward Island - **8**
- Quebec - **3**
- Saskatchewan - **16**

Of those **467** members, we have **27** new members that have joined our organization this year and the total of new members in each province is as follows:

- Alberta - **3**
- British Columbia - **10**
- Manitoba - **1**
- New Brunswick - **1**
- Newfoundland – **1**
- Nova Scotia - **2**
- Nunavut - **1**

- Ontario - **6**
- Quebec - **1**
- Saskatchewan – **1**

Membership benefits include:

- The opportunity to seek national FMC Mediator Certification and Elder Mediation Certification
- A listing on our find a mediator website page including website link
- Public referrals from consumers looking for mediators in their area
- Professional Liability Insurance Member rates
- Reduction on FMC conference and webinar rates
- A subscription to FMC’s publications
- Discounted rates on promotional materials
- Award Nominations
- Entry in draws for sponsorships or free merchandise
- A national voice for the field of family mediation
- Participation on committees
- Training opportunities
- Networking opportunities

The committee is always looking for ways to enhance our membership benefits and plans conduct a membership survey in the coming months to receive member’s feedback on what we can do for our members.

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.

**i) Elder Mediation Committee Report – Elizabeth S. Reagh**

The Elder Mediation Committee for 2015 was comprised of the following FMC members:

Chair: Elizabeth Reagh	Patricia Donihee
Judy McCann-Beranger	Elizabeth Sterritt
Anita Dorczak	Lynn Dykeman

We are pleased that every member of the Elder Mediation Committee holds certification as an Elder Mediator. Colleen Currie moved on to her other commitments this year. We are very grateful to her for the time she served and for her ongoing support.

It is with great sadness that we had to announce the death of fellow committee member and certified Elder Mediator, Andrew Pavey on October 24, 2014. Our thoughts remain with his family as they recently recognized the first anniversary of his passing.

1. This past year the EM Committee:
  - Revised the EM certification maintenance form to match the FMC Family certification form.
  - Introduced and promoted the EM brochure that was approved by the FMC Board last year.
  - Continued to work on promotion of Elder Mediation and follow up with the Ministries of Health and seniors.
  - Chair Elizabeth Reagh sent an article on Bill 356 to *News and Happenings* to build awareness of dementia care issues.
2. Topics discussed during the year that will have ongoing implications for Elder Mediators include: the federal government's *Assisted Dying Initiative* which will involve a six-month tour to probe Canadians' views on assisted dying; the importance of the promotion of research on Elder Mediation - both short and long term, and the *New Vision of Aging for Canada* CARP Report - to name but a few.

Our Committee is currently discussing a marketing plan for the promotion of Elder Mediation.

A special thank-you to Carrie and the Board of Directors for their ongoing support of Elder Mediation.

**j) Aboriginal Committee Report – Mary Damianakis**

The Aboriginal Committee began in the winter of 2013 and is trying to connect with the various Aboriginal Communities in Canada. The Aboriginal Committee member was featured in the Law Times article, on the new federal legislation for native territories in 2013 and is building on learning exchanges with various communities across Canada and including the Center of Excellence. The committee hopes to gain learning from our Aboriginal communities and help build a stronger alliances and future projects, with FMC. Some of the challenges include reaching out to remote areas in Canada.

Chairperson: Mary Damianakis and Ernest G.Tannis

Members: Nadini Sankar, Jeff Wilson

**k) Child Protection Committee Report – Mary Damianakis**

The Child Protection Committee began in the winter of 2013. 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.

Committee Members: Mary Damianakis and Ken Markley

**l) Diversity Committee Report – Mary Damianakis**

The Diversity Committee recognizes that more inter-cultural awareness and diversity is needed, in order to assist practitioners with their work. FMC hopes to build stronger relationships amongst all groups including, our Aboriginal communities, poor, handicapped, learning disabled, ethnic and minority groups, remote, and communities across Canada. FMC's certified family mediators, aspires to become better at being, inclusive, while embracing and acknowledging the similarities and differences amongst all groups in Canada. Diversity continues to evolve in Canada, and FMC recognizes the importance that we provide ongoing training in this area. FMC hopes to build stronger international and local bridges which can enhance our awareness to "inter-cultural insights" and mediation.

**m) International Mediation Committee Report – Mary Damianakis**

The International Family Committee would like to have more trained and experienced family mediators who can join the committee. This area of family mediation appears to be growing in Canada. FMC certification includes Standards of Practice, ethics and training in the various models, alongside evolving diversity. We recognize and understand that no mediation model can be imposed on clients, including Quebec's co-mediation model, which started in 1984.

We continue to seek out new members who have experience and help build an FMC IF team. It is important that people on this committee that have experience working in family mediation, and have a background in family violence, couple dynamics, children and their voice, parental alienation, and cultural sensitivity. The aim of this committee is to promote and advance the practice of International Family Mediation when it is appropriate and without any strong arming of clients. Our goals are to expand knowledge about IF Mediation, to provide education and possible prevention. We want to raise visibility of IF mediation as one of the alternatives available to families who are involved with international custody disputes. We hope to collaborate with our Central Authorities and Consular Affairs, alongside other agencies in Canada and abroad. In addition we hope to further our collaboration with the provincial associations, and develop additional work to both Hague and non-Hague cases. We need to further explore the issues of prevention and education and apply this nationally.

**6. Adjourned at 1:22 P.M. Pacific Time.**