



Family Mediation Canada / Médiation Familiale Canada

**2016 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2016**

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

**Inn at the Forks Hotel  
Forks Ballroom West  
75 Market Road  
Winnipeg, Manitoba**

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**Present:**

**Executive Committee:**

Lia Versaevel – President Elect (BC)  
Tamara Bodnaruk-Wide – President Elect / Treasurer (ON)  
Tom Dart – Past President (ON)  
Gerry Schoel– Member at Large (QC)

**Board of Directors:**

Brenda Arseneault (AB)  
Kathleen Bellamano (BC)  
Eleanor Moore (MB)  
Judy McCann-Beranger (NL)  
Julie Gill (ON)  
Frank Bulger (PE)

**Members:** Katherine Balagus, Linda Bonnell, Patricia Bragg, Joan Cotie, Scott Cruickshank, Rebecca Georges, Allison Hewlitt, Betty Ife, Greg McCann-Beranger, Elizabeth Reagh, Eric Skoglund, Norm Smookler, Scott Spence, Cynthia Spratt Goodmundson, Margaret Stewart Sweet

**Guests:** Mary Anne Popescu

- 1. The meeting was called to order at 12:35 P.M. Central Time.**
- 2. Acceptance of Agenda – Frank Bulger moved the agenda be accepted as written and Gerry Schoel seconded. The agenda was accepted as presented.**
- 3. Adoption of 2015 Annual General Meeting Minutes – Betty Ife moved the adoption of the minutes and Gerry Schoel seconded. The minutes were adopted as presented.**
- 4. Election of Directors - Nominations Committee – Tom Dart**

The 2016-2017 FMC Board Nomination Slate was read and presented as follows:

<b>REGION (PROVINCE)</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>POSITION</b>	<b>TERM</b>	<b>TERM ENDING</b>	<b>HISTORY</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
AB	Brenda Arseneault	Director Director Director	1st 2nd 3rd	2014 2016 2018	Elected Elected	Completed Sitting Incumbent
AB		<i>Vacant (AFMS Appointee)</i>				
BC	Kathleen Bellamano	Director	1st 2nd	2017 2019	Elected	Sitting
BC	Lia Versaevel	Director President Elect President Past President Director	1st n/a n/a n/a 2nd	2014 2015 2017 2019 2021	Elected Board Elected	Completed Completed Sitting
MB	Eleanor Moore	Director	1st 2nd	2017 2019	FMM Appointed	Sitting
MB		<i>Vacant (Elected position)</i>				
NB		<i>Vacant (Elected position)</i>				
NL	Judy McCann- Beranger	Director Director	1st 2nd	2015 2017	Elected Elected	Completed Sitting
NS	Keith Wallis	Director	1st 2nd 3rd	2013 2015 2017	Elected Elected Elected	Completed Completed Sitting/Incumbent
NS		<i>Vacant (FMNS Appointee)</i>				
NU		<i>Vacant (Elected position)</i>				
NT		<i>Vacant (Elected position)</i>				
ON	Julie Gill	Director Director	1st 2nd	2017 2019	Elected	Sitting
ON	Tom Dart	Director President Elect President Past President Director	1st n/a n/a n/a 2nd	2011 2013 2015 2017 2019	OAFM appointed Board Board Board	Completed Completed Completed Sitting Incumbent

ON	Tamara Bodnaruk-Wide	Treasurer President Elect President Past President Director	2nd term n/a n/a n/a 2nd	2017 2017 2019 2021 2022	Board Board Board Board	Sitting Sitting
ON		<i>Vacant (OAFM Appointee)</i>				
PE	Frank Bulger	Director Director	1st 2nd	2016 2018 2020	Mediation PEI Appointed	Completed Sitting
PE		<i>Vacant</i>				
QC	Mary Damianakis	Director	2nd	2017 2019	Elected	Sitting
QC	Gerald Schoel	Director	3rd	2017		Sitting/Incumbent
SK		<i>Vacant (CRS Appointee)</i>			<i>CRS Appointed</i>	
SK		<i>Vacant (Elected position)</i>				
YK		Vacant (Elected position)				
		Secretary				
	Judy McCann-Beranger			2016	Certification Committee Appointed	
	Judy McCann-Beranger			2016	Elder Mediation Committee Appointed	

### STATUS

<b>Sitting</b>	
<b>Completed</b>	
<b>Incumbent</b>	can only be for a third term if there is no other candidate for the region
<b>Candidate Representative</b>	represents a region
<b>Honorary Counsel</b>	represents an association
<b>Honorary Board Member</b>	no vote on the Board

<b>Term</b>	2 years normally 2 terms but can be extended to 3 if no other incumbent in that region
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**Gerry Schoel moved that the election of directors be accepted as read and Joan Cotie seconded. All in favour, No-one opposed, So Passed.**

## **5. Reports**

### **a) President’s Report – Lia Versaevel**

Since the AGM in Vancouver, BC in November 2015, our organization has taken some time to gain traction and regroup. With a Board representing people from across Canada, in several time zones, we have encountered some challenges in coordinating meeting times for our telephone conference calls, and have experimented with some alternatives. This has led to some frustration, but we have, in spite of this, made some progress.

From trying to revamp our website to sorting out intellectual property copyright issues, we have had some challenging events. As we move forward into the next year, we will need to resolve these and other issues with more frequent meetings of subcommittees of the Executive.

The planning of this AGM and Conference in Winnipeg has taken most of the last nine months to organize, but the results are stellar due mostly to the efforts of the ground team in Winnipeg. Congratulations are due to each of the members of the committee and all the people at ground zero in Winnipeg.

Since December 2015, with the arrival of their new baby girl, Carrie Cekerevac, our long term operations manager, has been on leave, and husband, Nick has stepped up to maintain continuity of support for FMC. We collectively thank Nick for his work, and hope that Carrie will return to her role in December of this year, ready to face the challenges of a new term and the changes it may bring.

With a new Federal Government now firmly established and several new provincial and territorial governments coming into place, we are poised as an organization to remind everyone of our 30 year established credibility and effectiveness in certifying members of our profession. Improvements to our website, upcoming webinars and other training opportunities, and some shoulders to the wheel, and we will get this done! I look forward to the last term of my Presidency and appreciate all the support I have received so far in this role.

### **b) Treasurer’s Report – Tamara Bodnaruk-Wide**

## Finance Committee Report

I am happy to report, once again, that the 2015-2016 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. Financial highlights of 2015-2016 include:

- We maintained the minimum balance necessary each month to waive monthly banking fees, which is a significant savings to FMC;
- We are in the process of having our website updated to include an e-commerce section to accept payments on-line for things such as yearly membership renewals, new membership payments, webinars and conference fees;
- We have earned interest on our locked-in GIC.

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 until I assume the role of President next year.

Sincerely,

*Tamara*

Tamara Bodnaruk-Wide, B.A., M.J.A., Acc.F.M.  
FMC Treasurer

### **5. b) i. Review of Financial Statements 2015/2016**

**The financial statements for 2015/2016 were presented.**

There followed a discussion of the various expenses which were clarified. The bad debt expense required further clarification. Tamara agreed to conduct further inquiry and report back to the members.

**Tamara Bodnaruk-Wide moved we accept the Accountants report as presented and Kathleen Bellamano seconded. All in favour, No-one opposed, So Passed.**

### **5. b) ii. Appointment of Accountants**

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

### **c) Certification Committee Report – Judy McCann-Beranger**

Many documents on the Government of Canada websites espouse the value of family mediation when couples are separating, and moving to new ways of parenting and navigating more respectful ways of being in essential relationships. Family Mediation Canada's certification program goes a long way to supporting the mediators who facilitate the development of high values for co-parenting and respectful interactions within families. A skilled mediator knows only too well that mediation is always a good option and valuable when those who attend are willing to move towards fairness and cooperation.

Across the country we presently have 136 certified mediators: 2 from Alberta, 112 from British Columbia, 5 from Manitoba, 3 from Newfoundland, 9 from Ontario, 4 from P.E.I., and 1 from Quebec. We have another twelve new applications in process with a stated interest from several others. Several new role play scenarios have also been developed.

Over this past year the committee has spent some dedicated time revising the Certification Standards Manual – a goal that we held for several years. We also revised the Candidate's Manual to reflect the changes in the standards and to avoid duplication. We collaborated with Family Justice BC along with a few other programs who are interested in teaching a standard. Many queries were responded to from people seeking or renewing their certification credentials. We reviewed several family mediation training requests and have just launched a series of webinar trainings, starting with six sessions of Mediating Child Support.

This year we have taken some time to explore our commitment to a National Standard. The belief that we have in common is that becoming an FMC Certified Family Mediator is recognized as a highly respected and unique qualification across Canada and internationally. FMC is the only body in Canada that has a certification that meets - not only the National standard - but also the IMI International standard in terms of advocacy, competence, professional credibility and quality assurance. Organizations and all those utilizing and referring to the mediation service can identify the most competent Certified Family Mediators in their province who have the sensitivities and commitment to the FMC ethical standards. FMC Certified Family Mediators follow a Code of Professional Ethics that is recognized by both Family Mediation Canada and the IMI. The public across Canada are assured that FMC Certified Family Mediators are

professionally educated, highly skilled in their specialty and, like other professional organizations, maintain the standard by meeting annual requirements.

A very special thanks to our Certification Committee for their donation of expertise and many precious hours. Thanks to our Certification Registrar, Linda Bonnell who oversees the assessment process for the Family Relations and Comprehensive certifications. Thanks to all who have helped in any way to promote our program and to the many volunteers and Mediators whose ongoing recognition, commitment and support of this exemplary certification process allows us to continue promoting and developing this necessary standard.

Certification committee:

Cynthia Spratt Goodmundson (MB)

Betty Ife (BC)

Eric Skoglund (NL)

Linda Bonnell (BC)

Judy McCann-Beranger (NL)

#### **d) Elder Mediation Committee Report – Judy McCann-Beranger**

Elder Mediation is growing in awareness throughout the country. The work of Family Mediation Canada in certification generally is a strong pillar for our organization and a strength is that it is recognized both nationally and internationally.

Family Mediation Canada joins with the Government of Canada in its belief that Canada is at its best when all citizens have the opportunity to reach their full potential, are treated fairly, and the contributions from every segment of society are valued. Mediation is a venue to make that happen.

Budget 2016 delivers on the Government's agenda to empower all Canadians to build better lives for themselves and to enable them to contribute to and share in the prosperity of the country. The December 4, 2015 Speech from the Throne set out an agenda to empower all Canadians to build better lives for themselves. The speech goes on to say that some investments are targeted to the most vulnerable segments of society, including seniors and veterans. Family Mediation Canada's Elder Mediation program has a huge role to play as awareness for this important service grows and the program is utilized to its full potential. We continue to meet our government representatives where possible and advocate for this important service to be included in the roster of services available to Canadians.

This year we have taken some time to explore our commitment to a National Standard. The belief that we have in common is that becoming Certified as an Elder Mediator with Family Mediation Canada is recognized as a highly respected and unique qualification across Canada and internationally. FMC is the only body in Canada that has a certification that meets - not only the National standard - but also the Elder Mediation International Network (EMIN) standard in terms of advocacy, competence, professional credibility and quality assurance. Organizations and all those utilizing and referring to the Elder Mediation service are able to identify the most competent Certified Elder Mediators in their province who have the sensitivities and commitment to the FMC ethical standards. FMC Certified Elder Mediators follow a Code of Professional Ethics that is recognized by both Family Mediation Canada and the EMIN. The public across Canada are assured that FMC Certified Elder Mediators are professionally educated, highly skilled in their specialty and, like other professional organizations, maintain the standard by meeting annual requirements.

This year we are hoping to develop the Elder Mediation portion of the FMC website.

With regard to the Elder Mediation Certification we currently have 23 certified Elder Mediation members: 1 from Alberta, 1 from British Columbia, 1 from New Brunswick, 2 from Newfoundland, 13 from Ontario and 5 from Prince Edward Island. Approximately ten more applicants are in various stages of the process and getting closer to writing their exam. The entire process usually averages around two years from when people enter the program and a very frequent comment when certification is complete is “Can’t believe how much I learned!”

The EM certification ongoing annual maintenance is now in full swing and the committee is working on marketing for both Certified Elder Mediators and providing ongoing learning opportunities. We have answered many requests over the past year with regard to ideas and ways to support families and others who were not yet ready for Mediation but who wanted more information, support and referral. We welcome support from any of our strong advocates and supporters along with creative ideas for our ongoing task of growing awareness within governments, provinces and communities. Bill C14 will add a dimension to our service that will not only impact Elder Mediator service but hopefully provide a quality of life for all who participate together to make a difference in each others lives.

A very special thanks to Certification Registrar for Elder Mediators, Greg M. Beranger who oversees the assessment process for the Elder Mediation Certification. For all who have supported this program in any way – a huge thank-you. For those of us committed to the service we are experiencing first hand what Thomas Moore told us long ago: that creativity means making something for the soul out of every experience.

Elder Mediation Committee 2015-2016:

Lynn Dykeman	Elizabeth Reagh
Claudia Brann	Mary Trottier
Anita Dorczak	Judy McCann-Beranger, Chair

#### **e) Governance Committee Report – Gerry Schoel**

The Governance committee met during the past year to work on a few projects one of which was to revise the manner in which the FMC Board of Governors slate is built and presented for the elections that take place at our AGMs. We hope that it meets with your approval.

Another project has been the Blue Paper on Membership. That is what the requirements should be to become a member of FMC, to sit on our Board, the Executive and various Committees. If you (our members) have any comments or recommendations please do not hesitate to forward them to us.

The last question that we have been deliberating is what should FMC’s position be concerning domestic / family violence. Once again, we will be consulting with the membership before a definitive position is taken.

Committee members:

Brenda Arseneault  
Mary Damianakis  
Tom Dart

Eric Skoglund

Ernie Tannis

**f) Membership Committee Report- Brenda Arseneault**

As of November 1, 2015 FMC has a total **411** members and the total in each province is as follows:

- Alberta - **46**
- British Columbia - **180**
- Manitoba - **14**
- New Brunswick - **8**
- Newfoundland – **6**
- Nova Scotia - **12**
- Northwest Territories - **1**
- Nunavut - **1**
- Ontario - **121**
- Prince Edward Island - **7**
- Quebec - **4**
- Saskatchewan - **11**

Of those **411** members, we have **19** new members that have joined our organization this year and the total of new members in each province is as follows:

- Alberta - **6**
- British Columbia - **7**
- New Brunswick - **2**
- Nova Scotia - **2**
- Ontario - **2**

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

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.

## **6. Future Vision for Family Mediation Canada – Members:**

### **a. Board membership:**

The Governance Committee was asked to review the representation of the board. British Columbia has 180 members however, only one member on the board.

### **b. Website:**

Tamara Bodnaruk-Wide reported that the website was under construction. The bylaws and board minutes will be made available on the new website. It was anticipated that the new site would be running within a month. Anyone who wishes to make suggestions regarding the content of the website should contact Tamara. Brenda Arseneault suggested a members only section on the website devoted to sharing materials pertaining to mediation for all members. She noted that security of the site should be emphasized.

### **c. Judge involvement:**

Norm Smookler suggested that we look at some way to engage judges throughout Canada to become involved in mediation.

### **d. Resolve:**

Lia Versaevel asked members to contribute to our publication, Resolve, so that it might be revitalized. News and Happenings announcements should also be included in this revitalization. This requires contributions from our members.

### **e. Staff expenses:**

Betty Ife commented on the expenses noted in our financial statement. Wages are 55% of revenues. Betty suggested that some thought be given to reviewing staff expenses. Tamara noted that this year was unusual as our administrator was on maternity leave and was involved for a period of time in training her replacement. So there was some duplication of wages for a period of time.

### **f. Resources:**

Kathleen reminded all to provide her with information about their particular jurisdiction which would be helpful for mediators across the country, such as training programs, and any other resources which are helpful to maintaining and providing mediation services.

## **7. Adjourned at 1:20 P.M. Central Time.**

