

**Political Advocacy Committee Minutes
Zoom, January 26, 11 a.m. Ottawa Time**

In attendance:

Lawrence Hrycan, Chair, Bill Berryman, Marilyn Bossert, Sharon Penney, Roger Régimbal, Bob Fitzpatrick, Don Gabel, Katherine Snow, Grace Wilson
Regrets: Gerry Tiede

1.0 Call to Order and Welcome

1.1 Meeting called to order by Lawrence Hrycan at 11:03 a.m.

2.0 Approval of Agenda

**MOTION 1: Bill Berryman moved, and Sharon Penney seconded approval of the agenda.
CARRIED.**

3.0 Approval of Minutes from December 15, 2023.

**MOTION 2: Bill Berryman moved, and Don Gabel seconded approval of minutes.
CARRIED**

4.0 Reports

4.1 **Executive Committee-** The Executive Committee met in Toronto for a full day on January 14 and a half day on January 15. From that meeting, the Executive scheduled an ACER-CART Board meeting for February 1st at noon Ottawa time. The Political Advocacy Committee as well as Directors, Alternates, Executive Directors, Presidents, and some Affiliates will be invited to this meeting. Things that will be discussed are: the Executive, future annual meetings, AGM 2024, priorities thought to be important, and to continue with the strategic plan. Another SWOT analysis will be done. The information will be gathered up by the Executive Director of the Manitoba Teachers' Society. With the information gathered a questionnaire may be sent to members for more input on what they think the Strategic Plan should entail. This will be part of our conversation at the Board meeting.

The hope is that we will leave today with some kind of suggestions for the New Mode plan on National Pharmacare. This needs to be done before March 1st since the Liberal government has indicated that they will be bringing something forward by then.

The Executive is meeting again on March 25 to firm up some of the discussion points that there will be after the February 1st meeting. The plan is to have

another Directors meeting in early April. The Executive feels that it is important to have a couple of meetings before the AGM on the 6th and 7th of June.

- 4.2 **Communications Committee**—The committee has not met since the last time the Political Advocacy Committee met, but all kinds of things are happening within the organization. Marilyn Bossert clarified that the Observers in the past are now referred to as Alternates. Including Alternates at the February 1st meeting, there could be as many as 4 people from every Member organization. She feels that having more people involved leads to greater ownership. Marilyn indicated that she and Bill have been working together on the New Mode project.

Some discussion took place on proper protocol of who was invited to meetings. Roger Régimbal pointed out that he would be sending the invites, and he would ensure that the proper protocols would be followed and the people who needed to be there would be informed.

Bill Berryman brought up a request that was made to the Executive from the National Pensioners Federation, with a motion being passed at the Executive meeting. The motion that was passed is as follows. “ACER-CART approves the National Pensioners Federation request that both organizations work collaboratively on national projects, issues effecting seniors in Canada.” The National Pensioners Federation have over a million members in Canada. Bill indicated that the Advanced Education Officer for CARP is interested in working with ACER-CART and the National Pensioners Federation.

- 4.3 **Health Services Committee**—Sharon Penney shared that the Eastern Canadian Retired Teachers Organization has met as well as the Health Services Committee. Health Services Committee identified that National Pharmacare would be their focus this year. It is now ready to go with New Mode. Their next venture will be to get signatures on the New Mode letter in all branches and divisions. The Eastern Canadian Retired Teachers Organization continue to have as their priorities, membership engagement and recruitment. The next priority for the Health Services Committee will be Aging in Place. In preparation for this priority, the Eastern Canadian Retired Teachers Organization are going to check with the provincial government to see if there are policies currently in place to govern aging in place, and aging at home. They will bring back their findings to the next meeting. This will give the Health Services Committee a starting point.

5.0 National Pharmacare

- 5.1.1 Bill Berryman shared a letter regarding National Pharmacare that he sent via email earlier in the day. He thinks it is important to explain to our members why we feel we need a National Pharmacare program. Bill would like to send this letter along with an

explanation of how to use New Mode to all affiliates. Marilyn Bossert would like to see this document go on as a President's Message that would go on the Homepage of the ACER-CART website. Secondly, she would like to see it in the Advocacy Section of the website under Call to Action. She mentioned that often when letters get sent to the MP or MLA, they may never see it, as staff members scrutinize the letters. It is important for our members to be able to access the facts when they wish to talk to an MP or MLA.

Discussion followed. All committee members felt this was an important letter and should be shared with Member Associations. A question was raised regarding how to get this information to the retired teachers in Ontario since RTO/ERO is no longer a member of ACER-CART. It was felt that an avenue to communicate with the retired teachers in Ontario might be through the National Pensioners Federation. Grace Wilson stated that she is the BCRTA Rep on the National Pensioners Federation, and she would be happy to share information through them. Bill Berryman is in the process of writing a letter to Trish McAuliffe to see if the National Pensioners Federation would be interested in taking part in our campaign. Marilyn will check to see if the New Mode software is capable of bringing in other organizations. Bill thinks that CARP would also be on board for the campaign.

Don Gabel felt that in addition to the letter on Pharmacare information regarding the National Pensioners Federation and CARP should also be considered. Discussion took place regarding whether affiliates should be encouraged to join the National Pensioners Federation and CARP. This led to two motions.

MOTION 3: Moved by Bob Fitzpatrick and seconded by Katherine Snow that Bill Berryman's letter be sent to all Members and make it part of any information sent out on the New Mode campaign. CARRIED.

MOTION 4: Moved by Don Gabel and seconded by Grace Wilson that the Political Advocacy Committee recommend to the Executive of ACER-CART that they encourage affiliates to consider joining the National Pensioners Federation and CARP. CARRIED

Marilyn stated that we need to have the documents translated into French. Roger said that he could do the translations. Bill and Marilyn will work with ARTA to get information out as quickly as possible after the February 1st Board meeting. Once translated they will be placed in the 2 places on the website that Marilyn mentioned.

6.0 Aging in Place

6.1.1 Aging in Place is a huge topic. Once the New Mode has gone out, Health Services will start to look at this topic. Health Services will do some initial research and bring it back to this committee. Marilyn mentioned that there is information on the website that is still valid. Health Services has sent an email to the Minister of Seniors, Seamus O'Regan, inviting him to the AGM in June. They are waiting for a response.

7.0 Other

- 7.1.1 Lawrence Hrycan will do a short synopsis regarding the Political Advocacy Committee at the February 1st meeting including the two meetings and the work that has been done to date.

8.0 Future Meeting Dates

- 8.1.1 February 1 ACER-CART Board Meeting – Noon Ottawa time
- 8.1.2 February 26 Health Services Committee
- 8.1.3 March 25 Executive Meeting
- 8.1.4 March 27 Political Advocacy Committee – 6 p.m. Ottawa time
- 8.1.5 March 28 Pension Committee
- 8.1.6 Directors' meeting – TBA in April

9.0 Adjournment

- 9.1.1 Bill Berryman moved the meeting be adjourned at 10:35 a.m.