

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
Duncan & District Branch, National Association of Federal Retirees
Held at Ramada, Duncan
On Thursday 20th March 2025

Call to order: President Rick Devlieger called the meeting to order at 11 am

Welcome:

Rick welcomed all and acknowledged a first-time attendee, Willi Aquino.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 7th December 2023 were distributed to those in attendance.

M/S/C (Bronwen Cossey/Pat Thomson) that the minutes be accepted as distributed.

Reports

President's Report:

Well, a lot has happened since our Xmas get together back in December. I can't help but feel that we are all going to be affected by things happening internationally and nationally that are not of our doing. Canada is facing an existential threat. We are all going to behave differently and view things we took for granted through a new lens. The Federal Retirees are no different and will have to adjust our approach and expectations accordingly.

The change in the posture of Association can be seen in a couple of press releases and documents provided to the public by The Federal Retirees.

First, back in November, NAFR commissioned a piece of independent research by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives on the impact pensions have on the economy. The report, titled "The Power of Pensions: The impact of pension income on Canada's economy.", is full of statistics and examples of how pensions are vital to the economy of Canada. Pensioners are taxpayers and consumers that contribute to all levels of governments.

Now, a couple of weeks ago, two articles from NAFR in the National Newswatch and the Toronto Star are warning the threat of tariffs will have a disproportionate effect on Canadians living on fixed income.

Notice how the focus has gone from a proactive stance on why pensions are good for Canadians to one of warning to not neglect seniors in the face of this unexpected "Cold War". And we thought the pandemic was a major pivot.

Public Service Pension Fund surplus

On Nov. 25, 2024, a non-permitted surplus in the Public Service Pension Fund was revealed in a statement by Treasury Board President Anita Anand. At the same time, the federal government announced its intention to move approximately \$1.9 billion from the Public Service Pension Fund to the Consolidated Revenue Fund and explore the next steps — effectively taking the surplus and moving it to the federal government's central account at the Bank of Canada.

The government has said that it plans on "engaging with all stakeholders" for "next steps." Though, at the time of writing, no invitations to discussions had been made to any stakeholders (bargaining agents and federal retirees).

Ageism Campaign

We've continued the battle against ageism on several fronts. Through our work with the International Longevity Centre Canada and the United Nations Open-ended Working Group on Ageing, we've made our voices heard and established the Association as a thought leader on the subject. Recently, that meant doing interviews after the release of a study by the Canadian Coalition Against Ageism, which included a survey of 1,000 Canadians. That survey revealed, among other findings, that 54 per cent are familiar

with the concept of ageism, but 87 per cent fail to grasp its widespread relevance and only 44 per cent agree that ageism has a negative economic toll.

New Prime Minister, New Cabinet

The Prime minister announced his new cabinet on Friday and there is no longer a Minister for Seniors. Something this organization pushed for, for a long time and it is disappointing that it is gone. As this is a temporary cabinet, we can hope to see a restoration of this ministry after the election, which will probably happen soon.

Federal Election

Currently There are NDP, Conservative, and PPC candidates nominated in all Three ridings we have members in. Cowichan-Malahat-Langford and Saanich-Gulf Islands have Green party Nominations, and only Saanich-Gulf Islands has a Liberal nominee. This will likely change soon. Never the less, we will be reaching out to our local candidates to highlight our concerns.

Gone are the days when all candidates were eager to attend public events and speak to large groups, which means town halls are no longer the gold standard. Often, one or more parties will decline to participate. This creates a gap in our advocacy work, particularly if candidates from a missing party are elected. This is where you come in. You may already have been visited by campaigners for Federal Parties. Talk to them, let them know yours and Association concerns. Retirement income security, National seniors' strategy, Veteran well-being, and Pharmacare. It is unlikely, they are going to reiterate their policies at your door. But they are taking notes to take back the HQ. If enough people mention these issues, the parties will react to them.

Volunteers

We are looking for new volunteers to join the branch executive, especially a branch secretary, first vice-president (future president in waiting), and members at large. For time commitments, there are three branch events each year and the executive also meets a couple of weeks prior to each meeting for planning. There is also a Regional meeting on the island and a district meeting on the mainland each year for some volunteers to attend, all expenses paid, of course. The president, and if funding is available, the vice-president also attends the annual meeting of members (AMM) in Ottawa each year.

This is an opportunity to participate in a national advocacy organization as an advocate or in a supporting role. Here is a chance to exercise your leadership and organizational skills. There is plenty of training and assistance from all levels of this organization. If you are interested, or have questions, talk to any of the Branch Executive here today.

Treasurer's Report:

Bronwen advised that the current bank balance for the branch is \$4428.36.

Documents were provided to the members on each table.

The reviewed financial statements for the year 2024 showing Loss of \$346.16 were presented.

M/S/C (Bronwen Cossey/Karin Laurie) that the financial statements be accepted as presented.

Bronwen presented the 2025 budget based on 2024 expenses and the Reserves Template for 2025 and explained that as we have no excess funds, we do not have any funds to reserve.

M/S/C (Bronwen Cossey/Dee Dohm) that the Budget for 2025 and the Reserve Template for 2024 be accepted as presented.

Programme Report

Kathy noted that plans for a summer event/picnic to be held on Vancouver Island are in progress. If anyone has suggestions, please contact Kathy or Dee. Details and invitations will be forthcoming.

Membership Report from George Cossey:

As of today, the Branch has 879 members.

George spoke about declining membership in this branch. He noted that it is difficult to attract new members despite the national membership gradually increasing. It was noted that lack of advertising for the association at retirement seminars is not helping.

Advocacy Report from Greg Taylor

Letters have been sent to the successful MLA candidates. A joint letter for both Duncan & Victoria has been sent for the two overlapping ridings. Meetings will be held as soon as the new MLAs are available so that we can present Federal Retirees issues of concern which, for the most part, are common issues with all other retirees in the region.

For the anticipated federal election, the Association will contact key candidates and then, once the MPs are declared, letters will be sent requesting meetings. The letters outline the specific issues of concern for Federal Retirees as well as general issues such as health care, elder support, and efforts to combat ageism, all of which impact all seniors.

Old Business:

None

New Business

BC District Meeting:

This will be held in Abbotsford from 13th to 15th May and Rick and three members of the Executive may attend on behalf of the branch.

Annual Meeting of Members:

This will be held in Gatineau from 17th to 18th June and Rick will be attending as the BSC which leaves another spot open for someone else to represent the branch.

Installation of the Branch Executive:

No new members volunteered to serve on the Executive. Pat Thomson installed the following Executive members:

President	Rick Devlieger
Vice-President	Kathy Pringle
Secretary	Karin Laurie
Treasurer	Bronwen Cossey
Membership	George Cossey
Advocacy	Greg Taylor
Communications	Paul Chmielewski
Health Benefits Officer (VI)	Karin Laurie
Health Benefits Officer (SSI)	Patricia Flannagan
Programme	Dee Dohm

Reviewer for 2025 financial statements:

Lawrence Hogge was accepted as our reviewer for 2025.

No Other Business was brought forward.

There were 44 members in attendance for the meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:45 am

After lunch the speaker was Lisa from Johnson, Inc

Originals to be signed by:

Bronwen Cossey
Secretary-Treasurer

Rick Devlieger
President

Next Meeting: Thursday 4th December at 11 am – Ramada Hotel (we hope)