

**FAMILY MEDIATION CANADA**

**2007 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES  
FRIDAY OCTOBER 26, 2007**

**7:30 P.M. (Atlantic Time)  
The Canadian Centre for Ethics and Public Affairs  
Atlantic School of Theology  
630 Francklyn Dr.  
Halifax, NS**

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**Present:** 4 Members Present In-Person. 15 Members Present by Teleconference.

**FMC Board of Directors Present:**

Linda Bonnell – President	(BC)	(Executive Committee)
Pat Donihee – President Elect	(NB)	(Executive Committee)
Betty Ife – Treasurer	(BC)	(Executive Committee)
Bev Porter – Secretary	(BC)	(Executive Committee)
Judy McCann-Beranger – Member At Large	(NF)	(Executive Committee)
Gerry Schoel – Member At Large	(QC)	(Executive Committee)
Frank Bulger	(PEI)	
Andrew Pavey	(NS)	
Elizabeth Sterritt	(ON)	
Kent Taylor	(AB)	

**1. The meeting was called to order at 7:36 P.M. Atlantic Time.**

**2. Acceptance of Agenda** – Judy McCann-Beranger moved the agenda be accepted as modified and Norm Smookler seconded. (#7. *Election of Officers, on the agenda, was eliminated as is determined at the first board meeting*)

**3. No conflict of interest declared.**

**4. Approval of the Minutes of November 11, 2006** – Andrew Pavey moved the adoption of those minutes and Gerry Schoel seconded. The minutes were adopted as presented.

**5. Committee Reports**

**a) President Report – Linda Bonnell:**

I took over as President of FMC on May 22, 2007. As a priority FMC's status as a charitable organization was reviewed and all the practical details and paperwork were completed to ensure that FMC is in good standing.

Without an Executive Director the FMC Executive often contributes additional volunteer hours towards the day to day running of FMC. Our Board met via tele-conference every six weeks and the Executive met at least once between board meetings. Over the last year new Board relationships have formed and a new energy has emerged. In order to sustain this energy we need our FMC members to join committees and to share their talents and expertise.

The focus of the Board this past year was on the big question: What does FMC do for its members? Why belong to FMC? We looked at initiatives that would benefit our members.

The financial picture for FMC is now stable and organized into a well-run portfolio. This enabled the Board to hire Carrie Cekerevac, as our fulltime Administrative Assistant and employee of FMC on July 3, 2007. The Board has embraced this decision as it felt it was important for Carrie to be available to our membership and to new members, on a regular basis, Monday to Friday. Our members can get informative assistance with their questions or be directed to a Board member or committee chair, in a timely manner. All of FMC's historical documents have been moved into storage near Carrie who has begun to sort and archive FMC's history. Carrie is also initiating and organizing many marketing ideas for FMC.

Last fall FMC negotiated a new insurance package for our members with Aon Canada Ltd. It's a great package for mediators. We were also approached by other organizations for letters of support for their projects. And we were pleased to award the Daniel L. Hamoline Bursary to Susan Gavin of New Brunswick.

The re-launching of our Newsletter *Resolve* was done for our FMC membership. It is one way for each of you, no matter which province or territory you live in, to share information, ideas, and educational opportunities and to become aware of what is going on in the field of mediation in the rest of Canada. Your Educational Committee has introduced educational Webinars as a way to provide educational opportunities in topical fields.

The Board has agreed to revive the discussion paper on FMC's Certification Equivalencies Pilot Project that was prepared in September 2006. The topic of Certification is indeed a sensitive one and each Board member brings to the table their own feelings and ideas, as well as their provincial perspective.

As a national organization we want to strengthen our relationships with Provincial associations. I had the pleasure of speaking with Alberta Family Mediation Society Board members, and the Provincial Director of Family Justice Services and A/Deputy Minister in British Columbia. I also met with Peter Salem, President of AFCC, to discuss plans to hold our AGM in May 2008 in Vancouver at the same time as the AFCC annual conference.

Family Mediation Nova Scotia offered to host the Annual General Meeting of FMC in conjunction with their Annual General Meeting and I will be attending in person. FMNS has also organized an education day before the AGMs and FMC has provided an educational grant to FMNS to assist them with the costs.

I look forward to a productive year.

Linda Bonnell moved that the President report be accepted as presented and Pat Donihee seconded.

Norm Smookler thanked Linda for her contribution as President.

**b) Treasurer Report – Betty Ife:**

It is my pleasure, as Treasurer for FMC, to report that Family Mediation Canada is in a stable financial position thanks to the hard work of the Board Members and others from 2003-2006 who were effective in streamlining our Organization, cutting costs, and creating a long term plan.

Despite a delay in the transfer of responsibility as Treasurer from Jane Warren to myself, and a delay in obtaining signing authority on our accounts for myself and Linda Bonnell, and geographic challenges (at one point invoices had to come from our Admin Assistant Carrie Cekerevac, in Waterloo ON, to myself in North Vancouver, BC, and then cheques had to be mailed to Michael Porter in Calgary, AB to sign, and cancelled cheques were returned to our bookkeeper, Brian Altman, in Waterloo, ON) 2006-2007 has been a good year for FMC financially. A big thank you to Jane Warren, who graciously looked after the Treasurer's portfolio well into February of 2007. Thank you also to Carrie Cekerevac, our Admin Assistant, for the outstanding job coordinating invoices and receipts, processing payments, making deposits, entering financial information onto our working database, and answering questions.

With technology and patience and flexibility on the part of our Board and Committee members, we conduct most of our business by e-mail, fax, and phone, including conference calls. This has greatly streamlined our operation. FMC continues to operate in the black. As of this writing all of our outstanding debt has been settled. Our reports have been submitted to various authorities on time. Expenses are reduced from the level they were at before 2005, and we continue to work to trim expenses where we can.

The balance in our operating account, as of October 17th, 2007 is \$44,218.87. Our income comes from membership fees, membership renewal fees, and certification renewal fees. We generate a small income from the sale of publications, and advertising (on our website). We also generate income from webinars which we share with our presenters 60/40 after expenses. From the income we generate we pay out approximately \$1850 per month in: office expenses (office supplies and equipment rental), and operational expenses (insurance, bookkeeper's fees, auditor's fees, utilities, banking fees. Similarly, we Carrie, bringing our total monthly expenses to \$4502.20. Annually this translates into a budget of \$54,026.40.

The balance in our certification account, as of October 17th, 2007 is \$6,279.98. This account is totally separate from our operating account. Certification fees are paid into it, and certification administration and assessor's fees come out of it. For the most part the income we bring into our certification account covers our expenses.

I will continue to provide financial updates to our Members via *Resolve* and *Resolve Express*.

Respectfully submitted; Betty Ife

Betty Ife moved that the Treasurer report be accepted as presented and Bev Porter seconded.

Bev Porter added great thanks to Betty for her contribution as Treasurer and for the great work involved with *Resolve*.

A discussion arose re having one year of operational expenses in reserves with a possibility of developing an investment policy to support this. It was decided that the membership would trust the board to do the best they can with the available funds.

*Appointment of Auditors –It was moved by Judy McCann-Beranger and Seconded by Pat Doniheethat the existing auditors, Simon, McWhinnie, Riediger & Meredith be declared auditors for the upcoming year.*

**c) Membership Report – Frank Bulger:**

It is an honor for me to present this report as Chair of the Membership Committee.

FMC's membership level is currently at 478 members—down from 577 last year—a difference of 99 members. The membership issue continues to be one of concern for Board members and in early 2007 we did a telephone blitz of unrenewed members which netted some results. The membership issue is an ongoing one and frequently becomes cross listed with issues of the Certification Committee which as we all recognize is an energy consuming issue for the organization as well.

The year has seen Carrie come on staff on a full time basis and she is a most welcome and helpful addition to the Team. She is consistently and patiently on top of issues which facilitates committee work. Thank you Carrie.

The Membership Committee is regularly recruiting new members for the Committee so if there is anyone who would like to contribute in this way we would welcome them and their energy and their ideas.

Respectively Submitted.

Frank Bulger moved that the Membership report be accepted as presented and Norm Smookler seconded.

There was question as to where the drop in membership came from and it was reported that the drop may have come from retirements or from NB as NB members are no longer members due to NB budget cuts for family court mediators. We also lost members due to provincial organizations having their own certification. It was also reported that our membership declined, but it now on its way back up.

The question arose as to what FMC is doing with respect to aboriginals. It was recommended that FMC would look at having native representation on the board and develop its aboriginal component.

**d) Certification Committee – Linda Bonnell:**

The certification committee members are Judy McCann-Beranger, Dr. Howard Irving, Bev Porter, Cynthia Spratt-Goodmundson and Kent Taylor.

The Certification committee met four times from Nov 2006 to present (February 5<sup>th</sup> 2007, March 27<sup>th</sup> 2007, April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2007 and September 18<sup>th</sup> 2007)

The Assessor contracts were reviewed, updated and signed for 2007.

Licenses to offer Certification Preparation Workshops were researched, and renewals sent out. The Justice Institute of BC has renewed their license.

The Applicant's Certification Preparation binder was updated and circulated.

Lilian Henrikson, our Certifying Administrator, spent an evening with the Committee answering questions about the application process, fee structure and special circumstances.

The Committee recommended to the Board that the window for applicants to submit their video exam be increased to two years from the date of application. The Committee also recommended that applicants who did not pass the written exam would only be required to re-write the portion

of the written exam they did not pass. A bank of questions is needed in order to fulfill this plan. The fees associated with this initiative still need to be worked out. As well, it was recommended that the process to upgrade certification include a new up-dated application, proof of maintenance of certification for every year since the original certification was obtained, and a written exam. And it was recommended that there be no time limit placed on applications to upgrade certification.

A sub-committee working group met to discuss strategies for offering national certification preparation workshops. No one stepped forward to take leadership of this project. We were unable to carry out the Board's plan to offer national certification workshops across the country due to a lack of participation and resources. A member from Ontario tried, but was not able to get enough registrants to hold a certification preparation workshop.

Since our last AGM we have 13 new certified members.

This brings to 154 the number of Certified Members, reported by province as follows:  
British Columbia, 112; Alberta, 3; Saskatchewan, 1; Manitoba, 8; Ontario, 16;  
New Brunswick, 8; Nova Scotia, 1; Prince Edward Island, 3; Newfoundland, 1;  
And Nevada, 1

Respectfully submitted.

Linda Bonnell moved that the Certification report be accepted as presented and Pat Donihee seconded.

**e) Education Committee – Judy McCann Beranger:**

As Chairperson of the Professional Development Committee I am pleased to submit my report for the period 2006-2007. The annual general meeting is an important event as it gives our Board of Directors and members the opportunity to stop and reflect upon our activities, accomplishments and goals for the past year.

***Review of 2006-07 Activities***

As a not-for-profit we are ever mindful of our responsibility and need to offer opportunities as efficiently as possible while keeping committed to quality information and identification of new trends. This year we have explored ways to offer and promote professional development opportunities. A valued part of our mission is to support, empower and strengthen families and individuals through the provision of professional mediation services. A primary objective of Family Mediation Canada is to provide a restorative and preventative function to people through mediation. This, in turn assists clients to find reasonable solutions to their presenting challenges, to learn new skills, to enhance their relationships and to improve the overall quality of their lives.

An important component of our professional development commitment is promoting and sharing a variety of educational opportunities with our members. This year we have partnered with many universities and curriculums vetting and promoting topics of interest for mediators. A sampling of these opportunities include:

- York University - Family Mediation series
- University of Victoria - Aboriginal Rights: negotiating strategies and agreements.
- Carleton University – Dispute Resolution

- Community Mediation of Southern Alberta – The Joy of Conflict Resolution: Transforming People
- Centre for Conflict Education and Research, Carlton – Law and the Mediation Process
- Ontario Association for Family Mediators (OAFM) – Elder Mediation Workshop
- Carleton University and St. Paul University – Families and Conflict: Challenges to Transformation
- Conflict Resolution Network – Building Bridges of Understanding
- Centre for Conflict Education and Research – Child Protection Mediation
- St. Paul University – Making sense of conflict: Leadership in complex times – offered in British Columbia and Ontario.
- Association of Family and Conciliation Courts – Applications for high conflict families, domestic violence and alienation.
- University of Victoria – The Art of Successful Engagement with Adversaries and Restorative Resolution: Nonviolent Communication in Practice
- University of Victoria – The Creative and Destructive Potential of Conflict
- Corkum & Associates Chartered Accountants – Senior Citizen and Estate Issues
- York University – Certification Preparation Workshops
- Association of Family and Conciliation Courts – Fitting the Forum to the Family: Emerging Challenges for Family Courts
- Member participation in public forums, workshops, and community presentations

As the needs of families become more diversified, mediators are required to become more diversified in their training. The advancing age of our population combined with our belief that all people deserve quality of life has resulted in elder care issues steadily finding their way into the mediation industry. In the field of elder issues there is a growing interest from lawyers, physicians, nurses, psychologists, social workers, educators and other healthcare professionals to refer to mediation as well as to enhance their own knowledge of mediation. Mediators have asked for training in related issues. Over the past year FMC has hosted training that has addressed the following issues:

- Eldercare issues
- Elder abuse
- Eldercare mediation
- Pioneering efforts in eldercare mediation
- Unique characteristics for elder mediator's
- Grief issues

The Professional development committee is interested in promoting learning this year that is research based. We know that past research shows that the level and intensity of parental conflict is a very important factor in children's adjustment after separation and divorce. Parents who cooperate after they separate, increase the chances that their children will have close relationships with both of them and cope successfully after the divorce. Parental conflict and lack of cooperation have a negative affect on children's adjustment after separation. When the parents' interpersonal struggles assume centre stage, the children's needs are not given adequate attention. We need to promote new research in the newer subject areas to provide necessary and current knowledge sharing. Once again this year we invite each of you to share your expertise in particular subject areas necessary for ongoing development of mediators. This will give us an opportunity to expand and improve our webinar series. We wish to offer programming that:

- Ensures the learning needs of all mediators are considered

- Improves all aspects of the quality of education and is delivered in adult learning fashion
- Broadens our curriculum to balance traditional subject areas with developing areas
- Builds links with communities, provinces, and countries
- Promotes and develops best practice knowledge garnered from Child welfare mediation, elder mediation, caregiver mediation as well as raises awareness of the ethical issues that accompany those forms of mediation.

I want to give a special thanks to the Professional Development committee, to President Linda and to Betty Ife who is doing a spectacular job for the professional development area by always ensuring that there are stimulating articles as well as current literature recommendations in every issue of Resolve.

The Education Committee Members are Dr. Pat Donihee, Elizabeth Sterritt, Pat McDowell, Greg McCann-Beranger, Laura Luz and Betty Ife.

Respectfully submitted; **Judy McCann Beranger**

Betty Ife moved that the Education Committee report be accepted as presented and Délima Adéa Petit Pas seconded.

Gerry Schoel thanked Judy and all involved for their hard work on the committee.

**f) Governance Committee – Mike Porter:**

Mike Porter was not present at the meeting and therefore the governance committee report was not presented.

**g) Nominations Committee – Gerry Schoel:**

Gerry proposed a motion that the positions of President, Past President and President Elect be 2 year terms instead of a 1 year term. Seconded by Judy McCann-Beranger. All in favour. No one opposed. Moved. It is therefore recommended that the bylaws be changed as of next year to reflect this motion.

The 2007-2008 FMC Board Nomination Slate was read and presented as follows:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Province</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Period Ending (AGM)</b>
Judge Michael Porter	AB	Elected	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Past President	2010
Erika Deines	AB	Elected	1 <sup>st</sup>	Director	2009
Kent Taylor	AB	Appointed	1 <sup>st</sup>	Director	2009
Linda Bonnell	BC	Elected	1 <sup>st</sup>	President	2011
Bev Porter	BC	Appointed	1 <sup>st</sup>	Secretary	2008
Betty Ife	BC	Elected	1 <sup>st</sup>	Treasurer	2009
Cynthia Spratt Goodmundson	MB	Appointed	1 <sup>st</sup>	Director	2009
Pat Donihee	NB	Elected	2 <sup>nd</sup>	President Elect	2013
Judy	NFLD	Elected	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Member w/o	2010

McCann-Beranger				Portfolio	
Andrew Pavey	NS	Appointed	1 <sup>st</sup>	Director	2009
Dr. Howard Irving	ON	Elected	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Director	2010
Elizabeth Sterritt	ON	Appointed	1 <sup>st</sup>	Director	2009
Frank Bulger	PEI	Appointed	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Director	2010
Mary Damianakis	QC	Elected	1 <sup>st</sup>	Director	2010
Gerald Schoel	QC	Elected	1 <sup>st</sup>	Member w/o Portfolio	2008
TBA	YK				

The President's position for Linda Bonnell starts today, because in 2007 Linda has been completing a partial term. Mary Damianakis's Directors position also starts today by acclamation. Unofficially, SK will be appointing Richard McCormick to the board. It was asked if any member knows of anyone who would like to represent YK on the Board; please contact FMC.

As all posts are to be filled by acclamation this year and no vote needs to be made Gerry moved the nomination slate as presented. Pat Donihee Seconded. All in favour. No one Opposed. Moved.

Gerry also brought notice to the membership that at next year's AGM we need to vote on and approve changes to the FMC Bylaws as we have changed the terms of President, Past President and President Elect to 2 years and we would also like the bylaws to read that the directors are elected for 3 year terms.

#### **6. Business Arising From the Minutes**

No old business discussed.

#### **7. Election of Officers**

The election of Officers will take place at the first board meeting.

#### **8. New Business**

The membership brought forth having an aboriginal representative on the board and also brought forth having an aboriginal committee. Matt Thorpe's name was brought to the table and he is from Ontario. Gerry Schoel advised that if he is willing, the board has to right to bring forth extra directors. Pat Donihee moved that the Board discuss this at a future meeting and invite all people from the first nations to join in. Motion: We ask the FMC Board to investigate & appoint someone to the board and get an aboriginal committee started. All in Favour, No one Apposed. Moved.

Next year's AGM will be held in Vancouver. Thank you to all board members, committee members and new members of FMC.

#### **9. Adjournment**

Motion for adjournment was made and seconded at 8:39 P.M. Atlantic Time. (phone line was then closed)

Minutes taken and prepared by Carrie Cekerevac, FMC Administrative Assistant.