



Belong Steering Group (BSG) Meeting Minutes

Date:	January 29, 2018	Location:	The Family Centre (Room 2015)
Time:	1:30-3:30 pm		
Present:	Iman Arab (Chair), Dianne Boston-Nyp (Vice-Chair), Pamela Albrecht, Jessica Cave, Minkyung Kim, Brice Balmer, Luke Moyer, Kelly Steiss, Ingrid Brand, Shannon Markle, Vanessa Lopak, Aleksandra Petrovic, Julie Sudds, Annabelle Girard, Janet Howitt, Jassy Narayan and Heidi Harris.		
Absent/ Regrets:	Karun Karki, Marika Galadza, Hoda Ghonim, Kelly Kipfer, Sarah Shafiq, Elba Martinez and Faith Hussin.		
Guests:	Sharon Froehlich (New Story Group of Waterloo Region)		
Staff:	Diana Palmerin, Jessica Thier and Paulina Rodriguez.		

The Belong Steering Group defines belonging as “an essential human need to be accepted and valued by others in order to reach one’s full potential in connecting, participating, integrating and thriving in the community”

1. Welcome, Introductions (Iman)

- Regrets shared: Sharon Froehlich from the New Story Group sends her regrets.
- Welcome new members: Minkyung Kim replacing Paulina Cisneros (KW Multicultural Centre), Julie Sudds replacing Donna Mancuso (WRPS), Aleksandra Petrovic (Social Development Centre Waterloo Region) and Annabelle Girard (Kitchener Waterloo Art Gallery), .

2. Review Agenda and Approve Past Minutes (Iman)

- Reviewed Agenda: Iman adds to the agenda update on World Refugee Day.
- No conflict of interest declared
- Approved November 2017 BSG minutes

3. New Story Group of Waterloo Region – Enhancing Belonging: A guidebook for individuals, organizations and communities. Invitation to participate in a focus group.

For the past three years, the New Story Group of Waterloo Region has been hosting community conversations on belonging and at the end of last year, they released a resource called “Enhancing Belonging: A guidebook for individuals, organizations and communities”. Sharon Froehlich connected with Diana to enquire if members of the BSG would be interested in hosting and participating in a focus group.

The purpose of the focus group is to gather 1. Feedback about the guidebook, 2. Understand what is already being done to enhance belonging, and 3. Identify ways to best support organizations in implementing strategies found in the guidebook. The group has obtained ethics clearance from Concordia University, where one of the authors of the guidebook, Darla Fortune, works as a researcher. They are looking for 6-8 participants in

the focus group but they can also accommodate up to 15. An electronic copy of the guidebook can be found at: www.newstorygroup.ca

Action: Diana to follow-up, circulate guidebook and organize focus group with BSG members.

4. Immigration Partnership Updates (Diana)

4.1. All candidates survey – Belong Steering Group question

Provincial (June) and municipal (October) elections will take place in 2018. In previous years, the Immigration Partnership has sent an all candidates survey on issues related to immigration based on questions from the three steering groups (settle, work and belong). Some of these questions have also been asked at all candidates meetings organized in the region. At the BSG March meeting, the members of the group will discuss which question(s) they would like to propose to be part of the survey.

4.2. Wellbeing Initiative Waterloo Region Update

Wellbeing Waterloo Region is a community-led initiative working together across sectors to improve wellbeing of residents. After a series of community conversations, the initiative is now focused on three main priorities: affordable housing, healthy children and youth and social inclusion. On January 23, Wellbeing Waterloo Region hosted a collaborative governance workshop and the Immigration Partnership, specifically the Belong Steering group, was invited to attend this session. BSG's action 1 on immigrant and refugee isolation is directly related to the social inclusion priority of the Wellbeing Initiative and we have been asked to start thinking in potential ways the BSG can be involved in the Wellbeing Initiative.

Action: Diana to incorporate this item to the next meeting of the Immigrant and Refugee Isolation Working group.

5. Community Action Plan (CAP) Updates

5.1. Action 1: Immigrant and Refugee Isolation (Diana)

This working group hasn't met since September but will meet again in February. Members of the group expressed the need to make of this action a priority of the BSG.

5.2 Action 2: Public Education Working Group (Dianne)

5.2.1. International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination campaign (March 21) – BSG input and discussion

The Public education working group has started developing the campaign for this year's International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (March 21st). The purpose of this initiative is to raise awareness and gather community input on how racial discrimination is experienced in Waterloo Region. A new element of this year's campaign is a call to personally commit to an action to eliminate racial discrimination in Waterloo Region.

At the beginning of March we will start encouraging partners and community members to take part in this campaign by attending various events and promoting to our networks. On March 21, we will be present at the Cross Cultures event in Kitchener City Hall and we will also be posting on social media (Facebook and Twitter) the posters/personal commitments of participants in this campaign. The goal this year is to collect and tweet and/or post 300 personal commitments.

BSG decided the message of this year's campaign will be: **I Stand for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination #belongtogetherWR**

Action: Public Education Working Group to continue working on this campaign and reach out to the rest of the BSG and other community groups to join in and support this initiative.

5.2.2. World Refugee Day Waterloo Region (Iman)

The theme for this year's World Refugee Day events is: Becoming neighbours. If someone is interested in organizing a World Refugee Day event anytime in the month of June, please connect with Iman.

5.3 Action 3: Welcoming and Inclusive Municipalities Working Group (Pam)

The local government presentation offered on Dec 6. To ESL students from St. Louis in Kitchener City Hall was very successful (more than 80 students were able to join us). We are currently working on reaching out to more groups to offer this presentation and particularly in this year, incorporate a section on voting.

The Institute for Canadian Citizenship (ICC) reached out to the City of Kitchener to enquire about the possibility of hosting another ICC community citizenship this year. At last year's ceremony in February 15 in Kitchener City Hall the agreement was that in 2018 we would try to organize a community citizenship ceremony in Waterloo. Pam Albrecht has been communicating with ICC and in case the ceremony in April takes place the BSG will be invited to help and be part of this event.

6. Community Update (All)

- **Heidi Harris: Public Health and Community Services For Newcomers to Waterloo Region” brochure** - Region of Waterloo Public Health and Community Services Departments have produced a brochure highlighting their services, programs, and information available to newcomers in Waterloo Region. The brochure is in English and translated into Arabic, Farsi, French, Mandarin, and Spanish. Digital copies of the English and translated brochures are available at: <http://chd.region.waterloo.on.ca/en/researchresourcespublications/newsletters.asp>. If you require print copies, contact the Public Health Resource Centre (by phone 519-575-4400 x2196; email phrc@regionofwaterloo.ca or online: <http://webapps.regionofwaterloo.ca/phrcpamphletordering>).
- **Dianne Boston-Nyp: 13th Volunteer Impact Awards call for nominations** www.volunteerkw.ca
- **Aleksandra Petrovic:** The Social Development Centre is an agent for the Ontario Energy Board to help with applications, specifically when a manual income verification is needed for households with adults who have not filed taxes before. Contact the Social Development Centre to make an appointment and we can help you with your application for the Ontario Electricity Support Program. Our intake workers can answer your questions, check your eligibility, do the manual income verification and help you fill out an application. Tel: 519-579-3800 or oesp@waterlooregion.org, <http://www.waterlooregion.org/ontario-electricity-support-program>

Meeting Adjourned at 3.30 pm

Next Meeting: March 26, 1:30-3:30 pm, Location: Kitchener City Hall (Conestoga Room)



Belong Steering Group (BSG) Meeting Minutes

Date:	March 26, 2018	Location:	Kitchener City Hall (Conestoga Room)
Time:	1:30-3:30 pm		
Present:	Iman Arab (Chair – Muslim Social Services), Dianne Boston-Nyp (Vice-Chair – Volunteer Action Centre), Pamela Albrecht (City of Waterloo), Minkyung Kim (KW Multicultural Centre), Ingrid Brand (Volunteer Action Centre), Annabelle Girard (KWAG), Jassy Narayan, Fabienne Prior, Kelly Kipfer (Waterloo Libraries), Marika Galadza (Reception House) and Faith Hussin.		
Absent/ Regrets:	Jessica Cave, Brice Balmer (Interfaith Grand River), Luke Moyer (YMCA), Kelly Steiss (City of Kitchener), Karun Karki, Shannon Markle (Idea Exchange), Vanessa Lopak (City of Cambridge), Aleksandra Petrovic (Social Development Centre), Hoda Ghonim, Sarah Shafiq (Interfaith Grand River), Elba Martinez, Janet Howitt (Delton Glebe Counselling Centre) and Julie Sudds (WRPS)		
Guests:	Victor Lefort and Georgina de Barros (Solidarity Alliance) and Emma Parsons (KW Multicultural Centre)		
Staff:	Diana Palmerin, Jessica Thier and Paulina Rodriguez.		

The Belong Steering Group defines belonging as “an essential human need to be accepted and valued by others in order to reach one’s full potential in connecting, participating, integrating and thriving in the community”

1. Welcome, Introductions (Iman)

- Regrets shared.
- Welcome guests: Victor Lefort, Georgina de Barros and Emma Parsons. New member: Fabienne Prior.

2. Review Agenda and Approve Past Minutes (Iman)

- Reviewed Agenda: switched order of items. Start with leadership transition and follow with guest speakers.
- No conflict of interest declared
- Approved January 2018 BSG minutes

3. Belong Steering Group leadership transition (Iman and Dianne)

Iman’s term as Chair of the BSG is coming to an end in May. According to our terms of reference, Dianne who has been the Vice-Chair for the past two years will become the Chair of the group. Nominations for the Vice-Chair role are open and we would like to encourage members of the group to nominate someone for this role by **April 15**. Self-nominations are greatly encouraged. Electronic voting will take place before the next BSG meeting.

Action: Members of the group to self-nominate or nominate someone else for the role of Vice-Chair and inform Diana by April 15. Diana will create an electronic voting poll.

4. Guest Speakers: Victor Lefort and Georgina de Barros on behalf of Solidarity Alliance

The Solidarity Alliance is a working subgroup of the Rainbow Community Council (RCC) that formed in recognition of gaps in services and essential resources for LGBTQ+ newcomers/refugees/immigrants to Waterloo Region. This working group is now composed of representatives from agencies who in some capacity work with LGBTQ+ newcomers.

The goals of the Alliance include aiding the creation of LGBTQ+ newcomer services in Waterloo Region, outreach to newcomer communities, and capacity-building for agencies and services within the region that serve LGBTQ+ newcomers in some way.

Since Solidarity Alliance's founding in August 2015, they have hosted a training for lawyers, paralegals, legal staff, counsellors etc. to network and improve their capacity to aid LGBTQ+ refugees in their claims and navigating the legal system. They've also organized a training done by the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) as a capacity building exercise for agencies who serve LGBTQ+ newcomers in Waterloo Region.

The list of agencies with representatives in the Solidarity Alliance includes: KW Counselling, ACKWA (The AIDS Committee of Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo & Area), KW Multicultural Centre, MCRS (Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support), Carizon, YMCA and SPECTRUM.

Victor and Georgina presented the Outlook study LGTBQ+ Newcomer fact sheet. This study explores the well-being of LGTBQ+ newcomers in Waterloo Region. The Solidarity Alliance is always looking for more members. Their email address is: solidarityalliancekw@gmail.com

Action: Diana to circulate links to the Outlook Study <http://yourwrrc.ca/rcc/outlook-study/> and Solidarity Alliance <https://yourwrrc.ca/rcc/solidarity-alliance/>

5. Community Action Plan (CAP) Updates

5.1. Action 1: Immigrant and Refugee Isolation (Diana)

This working group has been meeting and is still working on clarifying the focus of its activities and different ideas to bring together formal and informal groups working on issues of immigrant and refugee isolation.

5.2 Action 2: Public Education Working Group

5.2.1. Debrief of #belongtogetherWR campaign (Dianne and Iman)

The #belongtogetherWR campaign was a huge success on March 21st. There were almost 200 tweeted commitments by over 300 people who publicly shared their commitment to stand for the elimination of racial discrimination in Waterloo Region. This included tweets from several federal, provincial and local political leaders, many local organizations and a whole lot of individuals. In a bit more than a day, the #belongtogetherWR hashtag was mentioned over 600 times on Twitter, plus on Facebook and Instagram. On March 21, members of the public education working group attended the Cross Cultures event at Kitchener City Hall, Global Skills Conference and the KPL talk on racial discrimination in Waterloo Region to encourage community members to be part of this campaign. Thanks to all who contributed to the success of this initiative.

5.2.2. BSG Open Conversation in KWAG (Annabelle)

On June 19 the Belong Steering has been invited to host an Open Conversation on hospitality and welcoming at the KW Art Gallery. The idea is to continue having informal

conversations that explore what it means to be welcoming and what it means to be welcomed.

5.3 Action 3: Welcoming and Inclusive Municipalities Working Group (Diana)

An ICC (Institute for Canadian Citizenship) Community Citizenship Ceremony will take place on May 11 in the Rotunda at Kitchener City Hall. The original idea was that this year's ICC ceremony would be in Waterloo. Pam Albrecht had long conversations with ICC to make this happen but at the end it was not possible to find a suitable City of Waterloo venue for this event. The BSG will be strongly supporting this event and we would appreciate if you could save the date to come and celebrate with the new citizens.

Action: Diana to circulate more details as soon as they are available.

6. IP Community Survey findings and discussion (Paulina)

Paulina presented the most relevant findings for the BSG from the community and partner surveys. She also facilitated a discussion on what these findings mean to members of the group and asked for input regarding other elements the group considers important to measure. If someone would like to access and/or discuss the results from the surveys, please contact Paulina Rodriguez prodriquez@regionofwaterloo.ca

7. Community Update (All)

Meeting Adjourned at 3.30 pm

Next Meeting: May 28, 1:30-3:30 pm, Location: Kitchener City Hall (Conestoga Room)

Belong Steering Group (BSG) Meeting Minutes

Date:	May 28, 2018	Location:	Kitchener City Hall (Conestoga Room)
Time:	1:30-3:30 pm		
Present:	Iman Arab (Chair - Muslim Social Services), Pamela Albrecht (City of Waterloo), Minkyung Kim (KW Multicultural Centre), Melissa Strachan (Carizon), Jessica Cave (Bridges to Belonging), Elba Martinez, Fabienne Prior, Kelly Kipfer (Waterloo Libraries), Jonathan Moyer (House of Friendship), Marika Galadza (Reception House) and Faith Hussin.		
Absent/ Regrets:	Dianne Boston-Nyp and Ingrid Brand (Volunteer Action Centre), Anabelle Girard (KWAG), Sarah Shafiq (Interfaith Grand River), Luke Moyer (YMCA), Kelly Steiss (City of Kitchener), Jassy Narayan, Karun Karki, Shannon Markle (Idea Exchange), Vanessa Lopak (City of Cambridge), Aleksandra Petrovic (Social Development Centre), Kelly Kipfer (Waterloo Libraries), Hoda Ghonim, Elba Martinez, Janet Howitt (Delton Glebe Counselling Centre) and Julie Sudds (WRPS)		
Guests:	Sonja Erstic (Regional Advisor, Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, Ministry of Senior Affairs and Ministry of the Status of Women) and Ashley Salvador (City of Waterloo Bridges Program)		
Staff:	Diana Palmerin		

The Belong Steering Group defines belonging as “an essential human need to be accepted and valued by others in order to reach one’s full potential in connecting, participating, integrating and thriving in the community”

1. Welcome, Introductions (Iman)

- Regrets shared.
- Welcome guest: Sonja Erstic. New members: Melissa Strachan (Carizon) and Jonathan Moyer (House of Friendship).

2. Review Agenda and Approve Past Minutes (Iman)

- Reviewed Agenda: Added Ashley Salvador as guest to talk about City of Waterloo’s Bridges Program.
- No conflict of interest declared
- Approved March 2018 BSG minutes

3. Guest Speakers: Sonja Erstic

Sonja Erstic is the Regional Advisor for the provincial Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, Ministry of Senior Affairs and Ministry of the Status of Women. These ministries periodically offer grants to community groups and organizations that could support the work carried out by members of the BSG. Sonja encouraged members of the group to directly connect with her to find out more about these

grant opportunities. Her contact details are: **Sonja Erstic**, sonja.erstic@ontario.ca 4275 King Street East, 2nd Floor, Kitchener, ON N2P 2E9. Phone number: (519) 650-5482

4. Belong Steering Group leadership transition (Iman and Diana)

Dianne Boston-Nyp is the new Chair of the BSG. The group voted to select a new Vice-Chair and Elba Martinez and Minkyung Kim were elected as new Vice-Chairs of the BSG.

5. Community Action Plan (CAP) Updates

5.1. Action 1: Immigrant and Refugee Isolation (Elba)

The working group has been meeting regularly and has had a brainstorming session on potential activities to promote the networking of formal and informal organizations addressing immigrant/refugee social isolation. The group is currently working on reaching out to different formal and informal ethno-cultural groups in the region. The group is also working on organizing a multicultural forum in the fall to bring together different groups to talk about social isolation issues in different communities. During the summer, members of the group will join the Social Development Centre and participate in two neighbourhood blitzes in Kitchener.

5.2 Action 2: Public Education Working Group (Diana)

On June 19 at 7pm the Belong Steering will be hosting an Open Conversation on hospitality and welcoming at the KW Art Gallery. Everyone is invited to attend and be part of the conversation.

5.3 Action 3: Welcoming and Inclusive Municipalities Working Group (Pam)

The ICC (Institute for Canadian Citizenship) Community Citizenship Ceremony on May 11 at the Rotunda in Kitchener City Hall was very well attended. Thanks to the members of the BSG who facilitated roundtable discussions with the candidates to citizenship. Another local government presentation to ESL adult students will be offered on July 19 at the Council Chambers in Kitchener City Hall.

6. City of Waterloo – Bridges Program (Ashley Salvador)

In May of 2018, the City of Waterloo, Ontario was awarded a federal grant to help pursue an intergenerational and intercultural learning program. The program, known as "Bridges" focuses on building cultural connections by inviting residents of Waterloo to experience cultural knowledge and traditions from seniors who are affiliated with Waterloo's many ethnic and immigrant communities. It also aims to empower Waterloo's elders as teachers, mentors, and leaders for youth. During the summer a pilot program will be implemented. Ashley would appreciate if members of the BSG could promote this program and recommend potential participants.

7. Community Update (All)

Meeting Adjourned at 3.30 pm

Next Meeting: September 24, 1:30-3:30 pm, Location: TBD

Belong Steering Group (BSG) Meeting Minutes

Date:	September 24, 2018	Location:	The Family Centre (Room 2015)
Time:	1:30-3:30 pm		
Present:	Elba Martinez (Community member), Iman Arab (Muslim Social Services), Pamela Albrecht (City of Waterloo), Sue Weare (City of Cambridge), Kelly Steiss (City of Kitchener), Annabelle Girard (KWAG), Sarah Shafiq (Interfaith Grand River), Jessica Cave (Bridges to Belonging), Fabienne Prior (Community member), Marika Galadza (Reception House), Janet Howitt (Delton Glebe Counselling Centre), Jassy Narayan (Community member), Luke Moyer (YMCA), Shannon Markle (Idea Exchange), Aleksandra Petrovic (Social Development Centre) and Jessica Thier (Community member)		
Absent/ Regrets:	Dianne Boston-Nyp and Ingrid Brand (Volunteer Action Centre), Minkyung Kim (KW Multicultural Centre), Melissa Strachan (Carizon), Kelly Kipfer (Waterloo Libraries), Jonathan Moyer (House of Friendship), Faith Hussin (Community member), Karun Karki (Community member), Hoda Ghonim (Community member) and Julie Sudds (WRPS)		
Guests:	Kristen Bustamante (Region of Waterloo – Community Services)		
Staff:	Diana Palmerin and Sora Yun		

The Belong Steering Group defines belonging as “an essential human need to be accepted and valued by others in order to reach one’s full potential in connecting, participating, integrating and thriving in the community”

1. Welcome, Introductions (Elba)

- Regrets shared.
- Welcome guest: Kristen Bustamante (Region of Waterloo – Community Services)

2. Review Agenda and Approve Past Minutes (Elba)

- Reviewed Agenda
- No conflict of interest declared
- Approved May 2018 BSG minutes

3. Immigration Partnership Council Updates (Elba)

On September 19, Elba attended the Immigration Partnership’s Council meeting on behalf of the BSG. In this meeting, each steering group presented a summary of the progress achieved in each of the actions outlined in our current Community Action Plan. Elba encouraged all members of the group to have a look at this report.

Action: Diana to circulate among BSG members the Progress Report presented to Council at the last meeting

4. Immigration Partnership 10th Anniversary Discussion (All)

Next year, will be the 10th anniversary of the Immigration Partnership and each steering group has been encouraged to think in potential ways they would like to celebrate. Some of the suggestions made were: to revisit the commitment to have at least 50% representation from community members in the group, to focus on media campaigns, to gather testimonials and stories from partners and community members, to highlight the Syrian refugee initiative, to create a publication focused on the achievements to date and to organize a community forum for each of the steering groups. Important points to consider would be to determine who the audience would be and use what already is happening in the community. This conversation will be continued at the BSG November meeting.

5. Community Action Plan (CAP) Updates

5.1. Action 1: Immigrant and Refugee Isolation (Aleksandra)

During the summer, members of the working group joined the Social Development Centre in a neighbourhood blitz to find out what recent arrived refugees are experiencing in their neighbourhood in terms of integration. This was a very interesting exercise and there's potential to continue engaging in this type of initiatives at the neighbourhood level. The group has also been reaching out to ethno-cultural groups in the region to update their contact details. We know many new groups are currently operating and it is important to reach out to them. A brief questionnaire was designed and sent out to more than 80 groups. The questionnaire is composed of two parts: one, to enquire about basic information and contact details and the second, to ask about perceptions on issues related to social isolation, integration and social connectedness in different immigrant and refugee communities. The group is also organizing the Waterloo Region Multicultural Connections event on Saturday, November 3rd 11am-3pm at KPL. The objective of this event is to provide an opportunity for ethno-cultural groups to network, exchange experiences and explore ways to strengthen social connectedness across Waterloo Region's ethno-cultural communities. The event will be exclusively targeted to members of ethno-cultural groups and people with lived experience of immigration. Invitations to the event will be sent out on the first week of October. It would be greatly appreciated if members of the BSG could help the working group promote this event.

5.2 Action 2: Public Education Working Group (Janet)

The working group is bringing again the Global Migration Film Festival to Waterloo Region from Nov. 28 – Dec. 18. This festival is organized by the International Organization for Migration and its objective is to use films as educational tools that influence perceptions and attitudes towards migrants, by bringing attention to social issues and creating safe spaces for respectful debate and interaction. So far, three venues have been confirmed: International Migration Research Centre, KWAG (NOV 30 and Dec 14) and the Rotunda in Kitchener City Hall (Dec. 18). This year, the group is encouraging IP partners and other organizations in the community to host a screening.

Action: If interested in hosting a screening for the Waterloo Region Global Migration film festival, please connect with Diana.

Janet mentioned that due to the current political context, public support towards immigrants and refugees seem to be decreasing. Some members of the group mentioned that it is very unsettling to realize how some people think about immigration. We need to re-think what it means to be an advocate, it could also be a call to really think about dialogue and learn all together; there's also opportunity for depth in anti-racism work. It was mentioned that it would be good to be clear on what's the role of the partnership in terms of advocacy and to receive professional advice on how to best deal with hateful and xenophobic comments on social media.

Action: Diana to invite Tara Bedard to next meeting to talk about IP's advocacy role.

5.3 Action 3: Welcoming and Inclusive Municipalities Working Group (Sue)

On July 19, the working group delivered another local government presentation to ESL Conestoga students at Council Chambers in Kitchener City Hall. The group intends to start offering these presentations in Cambridge City Hall as well as reach out to other groups.

6. Community Update (All)

Meeting Adjourned at 3.30 pm

Next Meeting: November 26, 1-3 pm, Location: Kitchener City Hall (Conestoga Room)

Belong Steering Group (BSG) Meeting Minutes

Date:	November 28, 2018	Location:	Conestoga Room, Kitchener City Hall
Time:	1:00-3:00 pm		
Present:	Dianne Boston-Nyp (Volunteer Action Centre), Ingrid Brand (Community member), Minkyung Kim (KW Multicultural Centre), Sue Weare (City of Cambridge), Kelly Steiss (City of Kitchener), Sarah Shafiq (Interfaith Grand River), Jessica Cave (Bridges to Belonging), Fabienne Prior (Community member), Marika Galadza (Reception House), Luke Moyer (YMCA), Aleksandra Petrovic (Social Development Centre), Jessica Thier (Carizon), Kelly Kipfer (Waterloo Libraries), Jonathan Moyer (House of Friendship), Gabrielle Laurin (Conseil Scolaire Viamonde), Kristen Bustamante (Region of Waterloo) and Sanjay Govindaraj (Region of Waterloo).		
Absent/ Regrets:	Elba Martinez (Community member), Iman Arab (Muslim Social Services), Pamela Albrecht (City of Waterloo), Annabelle Girard (KWAG), Janet Howitt (Delton Glebe Counselling Centre), Jassy Narayan (Community member), Shannon Markle (Idea Exchange) and Melissa Strachan (Carizon).		
Guests:	Jenny Flagler-George (WWLHIN) and Anna Barth		
Staff:	Tara Bedard and Diana Palmerin		

The Belong Steering Group defines belonging as “an essential human need to be accepted and valued by others in order to reach one’s full potential in connecting, participating, integrating and thriving in the community”

1. Welcome, Introductions (Minkyung)

- Regrets shared.
- Welcome guests: Jenny Flagler George (WWLHIN) and Anna Barth (community member)

2. Review Agenda and Approve Past Minutes (Minkyung)

- Reviewed Agenda
- No conflict of interest declared
- Approved September 2018 BSG minutes

3. Jenny Flagler-George, Manager Patient Experience (WWLHIN) – Interpretation Services Initiative

Residents across Waterloo and Wellington who have a limited ability to speak English or French will now have access to professional interpretation services when they require specific health care services.

This joint initiative of the Waterloo Wellington LHIN and the Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre was announced on Friday, November 2 at a launch event at the Centre. Funding for this initiative is being provided by the Waterloo Wellington LHIN;

and, services will be arranged through the KW Multicultural Centre in partnership with Immigrant Services Guelph Wellington and Access Alliance Language Services.

Interpretation services will be available at no cost when residents go to their family physician, or when they access mental health and community support services anywhere in Waterloo Wellington. Health care providers will have fast, easy access to interpreters who can provide interpretation services either in-person or over the phone.

In-person interpretation will be available in approximately 50 languages. Interpretation over the phone will be available in approximately 140 languages. To access services, family physicians or clinicians will simply need to contact the Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre at 519-745-2593 to arrange interpretation services for their patients.

4. IP Council Updates (Tara)

At the September BSG meeting, it was suggested to invite Tara to talk about advocacy through the Immigration Partnership and how it works through Council. IP Council takes very seriously the interests and needs expressed through each of the steering groups (Settle, Work and Belong). Council has been very vocal around various issues filtering through other processes in the community. The connection to Council happens through the Chairs of each steering group. Council members have regular conversations with MPs and MPPs and in the next six months IP will go to all Councils in the region.

Public discourse and support around immigration has changed and IP bought space in a UW survey to enquire about the local public opinion on immigration in our region. Once we have the results of this survey, they will be shared with the group.

IP is currently carrying out its partner survey, please respond to it. Planning for the 10th anniversary of IP has started and the first event to commemorate this Anniversary will be in February. Members of the BSG will be receiving the invitation soon.

5. Community Action Plan (CAP) Updates

5.1. Action 1: Immigrant and Refugee Isolation (Fabienne)

On November 3, the working group hosted the first Waterloo Region Multicultural Connections event with the goals of: providing an opportunity for different ethno-cultural communities to exchange experiences relating to social isolation, social exclusion/inclusion and social connectedness; promoting social and personal connections across WR ethno-cultural communities and exploring potential for collective action to increase social connectedness and inclusion. This initiative was very successful and 30 people from 15 different communities attended the event.

During the event, two main questions were explored in round table discussions and each table presented two actions for next steps. At the end, we had a dotmocracy exercise and a few themes that came up were: the need to continue having a space to meet and learn from each other, having some kind of umbrella group to represent

different ethno-cultural communities and groups in the region and more information and education of available supports and resources in the community. A summary report has been created and circulated to everyone who participated in the event. The intention is to continue building relationships with these groups and support and facilitate their suggested actions. The group will continue working to follow-up and organize a second Waterloo Region Multicultural connections forum in 2019.

5.2 Action 2: Public Education Working Group (Kelly)

The working group is bringing again the Global Migration Film Festival to Waterloo Region from Nov. 28 – Dec. 18. This festival is organized by the International Organization for Migration and its objective is to use films as educational tools that influence perceptions and attitudes towards migrants, by bringing attention to social issues and creating safe spaces for respectful debate and interaction. This year, we are screening 10 films in 10 different locations in Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo. We also have new partners that will be local hosts for the film festival (Canadian International Council Waterloo Region Chapter, Laurier International, Commons Studio, Social Development Centre, KWAG, YWCA Cambridge, Sexual Assault Support Centre WR, YMCA, Idea Exchange, International Migration Research Centre, City of Cambridge and City of Kitchener). The last two screenings of the festival are hosted by the BSG in partnership with the City of Kitchener to celebrate International Migrants Day.

Action: Group to promote film festival and try to attend the last screenings on Dec. 18 to celebrate International Migrants Day.

In addition to the last screenings of the film festival on Dec. 18, Ingrid and Diana were thinking it could be a good idea to organize a story exchange between immigrants and non-immigrants to celebrate International Migrants Day. The goal of this story exchange would be to foster empathy and understanding towards immigrants.

Some members of the group felt a story exchange previous to the last screenings of the film festival would be too much and other people were not sure if this would be a good idea or not. Maybe this is something that could be done next year to celebrate IPs 10th Anniversary.

Action: Diana to send more information about what the story exchange would entail and group to vote on it.

5.3 Action 3: Welcoming and Inclusive Municipalities Working Group (Sue)

On November 19, the working group delivered another local government presentation to 45 ESL Conestoga students at Council Chambers in Cambridge City Hall. A teacher's package has been developed to complement the presentation. The feedback to this presentation has been very positive and the working group would like to be able to offer it to other groups in the community.

Action: Group to suggest other groups that could benefit from the local government presentation in Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo.

6. Community Updates (All)

Meeting Adjourned at 3.00 pm

Next Meeting: January 28, 1-3 pm, Location: Kitchener City Hall (Conestoga Room)