

# SETTLE STEERING GROUP

## Minutes

**Date:** February 11, 2020

**Time:** 1:00-3:00 p.m.

**Location:** MCC, 50 Kent Ave, Kitchener

**Present:** Eliseo Martell (Chair, Community Member), Laura Stoutenburg (Vice-Chair, Conestoga College), Ana Luz Martinez (KWMC), Jennifer Staples & Crystal Swinton (ROW- Public Health), Hoda Ghonim (SHORE), Crystal Brown (Conestoga College), Anna Schwarz & Marian Rozman (YMCA Immigrant Services), Eda Dede (Sanctuary), Stephanie Schruders (MCC), Prisci Ila Muzira (ACCKWA), Pauleen Payne (St Louis), Sarah Badran (Working Centre), Rachael Lake (WRCLS), Sanjay Govindaraj (ROW- Citizen Service), Tara Bedard & Dan Vandebelt (Immigration Partnership staff)

**Regrets & Resource Members:** Kaylee Perez (MCC), Debbie Engel (Carizon), Erica Dudszus (KPL), Diane McGregor (KW Counselling Services), Janet Waito (St Louis), Kris Marchetti (ROW- Public Health), Shelley Campagnola (MCRS), Nermin Ozdemir (House of Friendship, Family Outreach Worker Program), Sherry White (ROW – Housing), Lynne Griffiths-Fulton (Reception House), Gael Gilbert (SHOW), Sheri Follett (Big Brothers Big Sisters), Siba Al-Khadour (Levant Canada), Barb Van Giessen (The Working Centre), Jennifer Ardon (Canadian Lutheran World Relief), Sarah Harjee (CFFM), Sakina Kirefu-Khan (GRH), Ed Kaut (ROW-Income Support), Sarah MacIver (UWaterloo School of Optometry), Liliana Araujo (Community Member), Roger Gilbert (ROW- Children’s Services)

### 1. Welcome

### 2. Review of Minutes – Nov 26, 2019

- Approved.

### 3. Approve Agenda & Declaration of Conflict of Interest

- Agenda was approved. No conflicts of interest declared.

### 4. Immigration Partnership Updates

- IRCC funding for Immigration Partnership was renewed for the next 5 years. We are now renewing our Community Action Plan (CAP) for the next 5 years to align with the funding period. The first CAP refresh session was the Nov 29 planning day. The CAP will be finalized by April.
- IP Council has been focused on increasing awareness in the community. Rotary Clubs hosted a state of the region event last month. They wanted to work with us to expand the diversity of who they invited and engaged with.
- IP provided submissions to provincial and federal budget processes about the role of immigration and budget implications.
- BSG engaging with ethnocultural groups and how we can build their capacity and role.
- WSG working on an employer-focused talent hub and are gathering information and exploring possibilities. Looking toward a 2021 launch.
- The Immigration Matters survey report was shared in December and the updated Immigration Primer document in January. There is much interest from other communities in our work.
  - We want to make sure we allow the findings and what we’ve heard from immigrants and other sources to drive our work so it is evidence driven.

- Please use the data/reports from the survey and the Primer in your strategic planning, funding applications, program planning, advocacy, etc.
- Dan shared a draft Resilience/Vulnerability Index that incorporated 9 questions from the Immigration Matters survey as a means to identify groups that require further investigation and attention. This could be developed further for the next immigrant survey. All to share questions or additional insights with Dan.

## 5. Community Action Plan (CAP) Refresh

- Tara gave an overview of the proposed Immigration Partnership vision and mission statements and described a shift to a more asset-oriented focus (immigrants have significant strengths/capacities) with a mutually beneficial process for immigrants and the broader community. Two vision statements and two mission statements were proposed. Most preferred the second vision statement and the second mission statement, with several suggestions to integrate components of both versions.
- In the past we have referred to immigrants or immigrants AND refugees. IP Council discussed this recently and we are defining immigrants broadly to include all who were born outside of Canada and now live in this community – including refugees, international students, claimants, other temporary residents, etc. (When does a person stop being a refugee and be simply an immigrant or citizen/community member?) It would be useful to clarify what is meant by immigrant at the beginning of the CAP document. When exploring specific issues, data, etc. we may identify specific groups within the broader “immigrants”.
- SSG goals, engagement focus, barriers and actions in the CAP draft:
  - A number of suggestions were shared to improve the draft goals, actions and other draft content. Tara and Dan will incorporate into the next version of the CAP document. All to share any additional feedback/ideas with them.
  - It will be important to clarify how we can measure our progress toward our goals. We have a detailed framework for evaluation and an evaluation committee which brings together many pieces of data that gets at some of these pieces through the immigrant survey, partner survey and many other data sources.
  - The CAP must be inclusive of all in the community and can’t just refer to settlement organizations. We tried to be intention about where we will be engaging as a Partnership to work with many different stakeholders. The retreat included a lot of actions about collaboration within the sector/partners – that was incorporated but also reaching out beyond the usual partners. Increased engagement with the whole community is an overarching five-year focus.
  - It would be very interesting for us to all know who is already engaged and identify the gaps. We might be surprised in the breadth of who is involved.
  - We don’t want a long list of all individual activities but to keep it broader so can adapt as context changes over the next 5 years.
  - Some of the goals are not likely to be completely solved in the 5 years of the CAP.
  - There may be too many goals. We should focus on 1 or 2 that we can sink our teeth into. We will need to continually clarify specific activities as the focus for the coming year – each year develop a work plan.
  - This action plan is based on the previous actions that have done in the last 10 years. The actions here are often about continuing to advance those ideas. The draft doesn’t include all the achievements to date. It would be useful to include this and to know we are building on these. The engagement focus, for instance, makes more sense when we see in this context. We are not starting over but building on past and current work. Could include in the actions a description of what we’ve done, how are we implementing currently, and what we need to do more/differently (for example with housing, language, interpretation).

- We need to connect some of the dots between the sections in here (like barriers, goals, actions, etc.). This would give us context to understand the document.
- We also want to look across pillars and partnership-wide perspective.

## 6. Community Updates/Discussions

- Interpretation
  - The Interpretation Working Group organized a meeting with LHIN staff and KW hospitals to discuss how to promote broadly adopted and consistent interpretation in health settings – hospitals, physicians, specialists, etc. Collective actions are being worked on. The KW4 Ontario Health Teams (OHT) – is submitting an OHT proposal to the province for the Kitchener-Waterloo-Woolwich-Wilmot-Wellesley area. They have identified refugees as one of their 3 priority populations in the first year.
  - In the fall the LHIN extended their funding for their interpretation service (through KWMC) to include specialists and others beyond family doctors. Many have registered for this interpretation service but there are many more that may need to be encouraged. **ACTION: Please encourage any physicians you work with to register for this service by emailing the KWMC (interpreters@kwmc-on.com).**
- Housing Working Group – The working group will be meeting Feb 25. Staff from IP, Reception House and MCRS met with the City of Kitchener about the development of their affordable housing strategy over the course of 2020, including figuring out the details of inclusionary zoning in Kitchener.
- Allies in Refugee Integration – This provincial research project (through OCASI and Refugee613) recently put out a call for proposals. YMCA Immigrant Services and MCC were successful in their joint proposal to pilot case management with private sponsorship groups. Settlement workers will work with private refugee sponsorship groups before the sponsored individuals arrive and for the first year.
- Immunization – Public Health’s suspension process occurs in the spring. The elementary suspension date is March 25 and high school is April 29. When children enter school, they are asked to submit their immunizations. New immigrants/refugees may think that because they are not immunized, they will not be able to attend school until they are immunized. This is not true. Public Health starts record collection and analysis of their records and will send out letters to remind clients what is required. Newcomers have until the above dates to get immunized or submit records before suspension occurs. If they do not have a family doctor but do have OHIP they can go to any walk-in clinic. Public Health can see them for their first set of immunizations if they do not have their OHIP yet.
- Global Skills Conference is coming up on March 5. Please promote.
- Carizon is posting for a trauma counsellor for newcomers with new IRCC funding for trauma stabilization for newcomers. They will be launching a trauma stabilization group along with other Promise of Partnership programming. Also launching a seniors programming (with other agencies) starting in April. **ACTION: Connect with Debbie if you have questions or clients to refer.**

## 7. Next Meetings

- Apr 28, 1-3pm at MCC (50 Kent Ave)
- Jun 23, 1-3pm at MCC (50 Kent Ave)
- Sep 22, 1-3pm at MCC (50 Kent Ave)
- Nov 24, 1-3pm at MCC (50 Kent Ave)

# SETTLE STEERING GROUP

## Minutes

**Date:** April 28, 2020

**Time:** 1:00-2:30 p.m.

**Location:** Zoom virtual meeting

**Present:** Eliseo Martell (Chair, Community Member), Laura Stoutenburg (Vice-Chair, Conestoga College), Ana Luz Martinez (KWMC), Hoda Ghonim (SHORE), Crystal Brown (Conestoga College), Anna Schwarz & Marian Rozman (YMCA Immigrant Services), Eda Dede (Sanctuary), Stephanie Schreuders & Kaylee Perez (MCC), Debbie Engel (Carizon), Jarvis Sparks (KPL), Priscilla Muzira (ACCKWA), Pauleen Payne & Janet Waito (St Louis), Rachael Lake (WRCLS), Nermin Ozdemir (House of Friendship, Family Outreach Worker Program), Sherry White (ROW – Housing), Lynne Griffiths-Fulton (Reception House), Abiha Syed & Dan Vandebelt (Immigration Partnership staff), Julia Kurzawa & Sahar Zohni (guests from CHEO)

**Regrets & Resource Members:** Diane McGregor (KW Counselling Services), Kris Marchetti & Jennifer Staples & Crystal Swinton (ROW- Public Health), Shelley Campagnola (MCRS), Gael Gilbert (SHOW), Sheri Follett (Big Brothers Big Sisters), Rana Shami (KidsAbility), Sarah Badran (Working Centre), Siba Al-Khadour (Levant Canada), Barb Van Giessen (The Working Centre), Sanjay Govindaraj (ROW- Citizen Service), Jennifer Ardon (Canadian Lutheran World Relief), Sarah Harjee (CFFM), Sakina Kirefu-Khan (GRH), Ed Kaut (ROW-Income Support), Sarah MacIver (UWaterloo School of Optometry), Liliana Araujo (Community Member), Roger Gilbert (ROW- Children’s Services)

### 1. Welcome

- Eliseo welcomed everyone to this first Zoom virtual meeting. All introduced themselves.

### 2. Approval of Agenda & Review of Minutes (Feb 11, 2019)

- Agenda approved. Minutes approved.

### 3. National Newcomer Navigation Network (N4)

- Julia Kurzawa & Sahar Zohni provided an overview of the National Newcomer Navigation Network (N4) – a network funded by IRCC to connect the settlement and health sector and support those providing health system navigation support to newcomers. Their website (<https://www.newcomernavigation.ca>) and national collaboration/support network will officially be launched later in May. They are also hosting a free online course that is currently accepting nominations until May 15. The first cohort of 30 students will start in July and a second in January. The course is designed for people working with newcomers in the settlement or health sectors. **ACTION: Contact Julia Kurzawa JKurzawa@cheo.on.ca for more information about N4 or Natalie Graham NaGraham@cheo.on.ca if you are interested in nominating any of your staff for the online course.**

### 4. Pandemic Response – Roundtable Discussion

- The group discussed what they are seeing in their work with newcomers – in particular, challenges, gaps and key priorities at this time.
- Refugees have some particular issues.
  - Private refugee sponsors have questions regarding families that are waiting to come to Canada. It is a challenge not knowing when immigration processes will resume. Sponsors and their families are anxious with the uncertainty of the present Covid-19 times – in particular those at the end of the 1-year sponsorship are concerned as they transition from the sponsor relationship. MCC has increased frequency of communication – especially around available financial supports. The Allies in Refugee Integration

- partnership with YMCA to pilot additional settlement worker connections with sponsor groups has been quite valuable.
  - All refugee claimant cases are on hold and no IRB hearings are happening.
- Information sharing is a need at this time.
  - It is sometimes a challenge to know which organizations are operating and how to connect/refer. Some organizations' website information isn't kept up to date.
  - Many organizations shared that they are operating many or all of their services on a virtual basis, or sometimes in-person where needed for emergency needs (e.g. SHORE, KWMC, Sanctuary, etc.)
  - Some newcomers do not fully understand COVID19. There is a need for a shift in thinking to a long term impact rather than short term crisis.
  - Some organizations are looking to do group activities to share information with clients (e.g. about coronavirus). Many people are calling and asking when this will be over – and expecting May 31 it will go back to normal. They are hearing false information from family/friends – we need to encourage them how to find good quality information.
  - It is challenging to stay on top of constantly changing new information.
  - We have been very busy helping clients apply for the benefits.
  - Not all IRCC or other forms are fully available online.
  - Information about financial aid and eligibility is also important (i.e. some newcomers have applied to CERB when they aren't eligible, later need to pay back). **ACTION: If partners have questions about CERB eligibility they can contact Rachael Lake at Community Legal Services (laker@lao.on.ca).**
- Mental health is a concern.
  - Mental health is going to be important. Many in the newcomer population have trauma in their background. Promise of Partnership (Carizon) has wellbeing orientations for newcomers that arrive and others in the community (available virtually). We need to respond with an awareness of trauma-informed care. Carizon will be launching a trauma stabilization group. **ACTION: Debbie will share information.**
  - Carizon has been continuing their previous support regarding newcomer mental health as well as launching new group and individual counselling for newcomers. Any partners can make referrals to the Promise of Partnership for help navigating the mental health system or for a counsellor. Carizon just this week launched a women's group and newcomer youth group. **ACTION: Debbie will share the details about referrals for individual newcomer support and what groups will be offered.** Other local counselling organizations are also available for virtual sessions.
  - There is a need to collaborate around supporting youth. While they typically don't have tech struggles they are struggling. Carizon has supports for youth mental health and any partners can contact them about that.
- Technology access and familiarity are critical issues at this time for some newcomers.
  - There may be issues with which apps to use (i.e. Carizon uses Microsoft Teams for security/privacy reasons but clients may be more comfortable using Zoom). Many newcomers (though not all) are familiar with WhatsApp. How to reach newcomers that aren't comfortable with virtual tools? Carizon is connecting with people during food distribution at community centres. This includes sharing tip sheets about using tech options (tip sheets created by teen volunteers). **ACTION: Debbie will look into sharing these tip sheets with other organizations.**
  - A challenge of working with clients virtually is that not everyone has home internet access.
  - Connecting and working with seniors is particularly challenging as many may not have tech access or may only have a phone (without familiarity to send photos or other basic tasks). They also may not trust technology.

- In addition to phone appointments, Sanctuary is also communicating by texts with patients (e.g. WhatsApp). Some patients are not keen on tech options.
- St Louis is offering virtual ESL classes. Some level of tech literacy will inevitably come out of virtual classes. One challenge to supporting the students at the lowest English levels. Teachers are doing ESL sessions on the topic of COVID19 as a means to learn English.
- We as staff are continually learning about new technology as well.
- How can we work together to increase our ability and our clients' ability to use technology effectively?
- Housing is also a concern.
  - A few families are waiting for housing but found that no one will show apartments now.
- Physical distancing/isolation can be an issue when seeing clients in person.
  - Sanctuary is trying to keep the number of people physically in their health clinic at low levels and only for critical visits. Staff are working part of the week at home and are doing phone consultations with patients first to assess if their needs can be addressed virtually. Are using interpretation when needed. Will see current or new vulnerable patients for emergency issues.
- Domestic violence is also a concern, particularly during isolation.
  - The Children and Family pandemic working group and the Communications group are looking at putting out messaging around child safety and sharing at food distribution, radio, TV, etc. Organizations such as F&CS, police and domestic violence organizations are available for support.
- Sharing with each other about what is available and what different organizations are doing is valuable for us to work more effectively. **ACTION: All to forward new resources to Dan to share broadly.**

## 5. Community Action Plan (2020-2025)

- At the planning retreat this past fall we talked about our next Community Action Plan (CAP), our 5-year Immigration Partnership strategic plan, what should be included, and discussed the CAP draft at our last SSG meeting (February). Those comments were incorporated and IP Council approved it in principle at their last meeting 2 weeks ago. Council wanted to give each of the steering groups one last chance to look at it and share if there are any glaring omissions.
- It was felt that our previous SSG input was incorporated well. There is a clear enumeration of current challenges and envisioned steps forward. It is useful to see the context sections about what we have accomplished so far and what we are building on.
- The group was in favour of moving forward with this 2020-2025 Community Action Plan.
- Next steps are to collectively develop more detailed work plans for the short and medium term. Eliseo, Laura and Dan to work with task groups over the coming months to start to draft work plans for the next year or so.
- It may be valuable to develop some priorities/actions for the short term (4-5 months as we continue to respond in the context of the pandemic).

## 6. Other Updates

- Pauleen shared that St Louis could use chromebooks/laptops for students that don't have access to those for virtual learning. Lynne suggested that KPL may have some options.

## 7. Next Meetings

- May 26, 1-2.30pm virtually on Zoom
- Jun 23, 1-3pm at TBD
- Sep 22, 1-3pm at MCC (50 Kent Ave)
- Nov 24-3pm at MCC (50 Kent Ave)

# SETTLE STEERING GROUP

## Minutes

**Date:** May 26, 2020

**Time:** 1:00-2:00 p.m.

**Location:** Zoom virtual meeting

**Present:** Laura Stoutenburg (Vice-Chair, Conestoga College), Ana Luz Martinez (KWMC), Hoda Ghonim (SHORE), Anna Schwarz & Marian Rozman (YMCA Immigrant Services), Eda Dede (Sanctuary), Debbie Engel (Carizon), Jarvis Sparks (KPL), Priscilla Muzira (ACCKWA), Pauleen Payne & Janet Waito (St Louis), Rana Shami (KidsAbility), Siba Al-Khadour (Levant Canada), Nermin Ozdemir (House of Friendship, Family Outreach Worker Program), Sanjay Govindaraj (ROW- Citizen Service), Sherry White (ROW – Housing), Lynne Griffiths-Fulton (Reception House), Abiha Syed & Dan Vandebelt (Immigration Partnership staff)

**Regrets & Resource Members:** Eliseo Martell (Chair, Community Member), Diane McGregor (KW Counselling Services), Kris Marchetti & Jennifer Staples & Crystal Swinton (ROW- Public Health), Crystal Brown (Conestoga College), Shelley Campagnola (MCRS), Stephanie Schreuders & Kaylee Perez (MCC), Gael Gilbert (SHOW), Sheri Follett (Big Brothers Big Sisters), Rachael Lake (WRCLS), Sarah Badran & Barb Van Giessen (The Working Centre), Jennifer Ardon (Canadian Lutheran World Relief), Sarah Harjee (CFFM), Sakina Kirefu-Khan (GRH), Ed Kaut (ROW-Income Support), Sarah MacIver (UWaterloo School of Optometry), Liliana Araujo (Community Member), Roger Gilbert (ROW- Children's Services)

### 1. Welcome

### 2. Approval of Agenda & Review of Minutes (Apr 28, 2019)

- Agenda approved. Minutes approved.

### 3. Check-in – Updates and Issues

- We used breakout groups for introductions and to identify key issues we are seeing at this time.
- Sanctuary – offering hybrid services - doing many virtual visits but with in-person where needed; patients have been quite understanding; we are texting/messaging, phone calls, and social media to engage patients
- Carizon – counselling is virtual but starting to explore starting face to face with clients that struggle with virtual; have capacity to take on some clients; Promise of Partnership – are starting the navigation and counselling of newcomers – have started groups (women, wellness orientation for an organization, workshops); doing wellness calls with WWR (clients call the access number; orgs can share the number with clients); have respite for families
- St Louis – virtual classes going well; teachers and students have learned a lot about how to teach/learn virtually; some students are quite engaged and for some their interest is dropping off with better weather and as time goes by; working to engage these students; getting laptops for some students was quite helpful (as a result of connections at last SSG mtg); there are some great things about remote learning (fillable forms, colourful resources, Google Meet breakout rooms, etc); great to try new ways of learning; also some families are learning together now; very soon will decide about summer classes; not sure if we will be remote or mix of in-class/remote in the fall
- Conestoga LINC – some good experimentation (Zoom, What's App, online portfolios); equity of access is still an issue – some are all on phones, some full computer and some just phone calls with their teacher on a regular basis
- KWMC – in the early days of the pandemic the focus was on COVID19 and pandemic supports; are now also working more on regular issues like citizenship

- Let's Talk youth program for high school exploring career paths - has been challenging as they have a lot of site-based activities but are doing as much as possible online;
- are not yet able to provide Commissioner of Oaths services but are exploring options
- doing outreach by phone and will do some home visits, meeting in parking lots, etc (i.e if they need drop off grocery vouchers, porch visits)
- seniors are a group that is challenged by online services; looking at seniors reassurance calls; will be calling those that are needing support in other languages
- equity is a challenge for some – both tech access as well as language literacy; will need to look at tech literacy going forward; there are opportunities with remote connections;
- St Louis will be looking at tech literacy in the fall; may continue to use the e-platform in the fall but also do it when in-person services resume; hoping to have every student have a Chromebook in the fall; while there are costs, some learners/clients are also experiencing some decreased costs (bus/travel) or decreased travel time
- RCTech (Renewed Computers Technology) sells affordable refurbished computers to people living on low incomes; Dan will organize a Zoom call with RCTech next week so anyone can get an overview, find out how to support clients to apply and ask questions
- KPL (Kitchener Public Library) is offering many programs virtually and promoting online resources; possibly offering curbside pickup of books and physical collections by mid June
- Family Outreach Worker program – working remotely with 14 outreach workers in all cities/townships; supporting families depending on needs – often how to apply for CERB and student supports, also recreation ideas/supports for parents with young children; [House of Friendship has food hamper programs](#) through their regular site and community centres; used to do home delivery only for people who have physical barriers and seniors but now they can request hampers if they are having transportation issues
- Region of Waterloo is exploring public engagement including how to do video calls that are more accessible to more people; there are challenges like captions, translation, etc.;
  - Sanjay is looking to make a toolkit for staff to make virtual meetings accessible (pre-calls, post-calls, etc); if we figure this out during this time there is the opportunity to reach people better even when in-person resumes; all to share any helpful tools/resources with Sanjay and he will share the toolkit when completed
  - Automatic closed captioning/voice capture (using OneDrive) is useful – though not perfect; Microsoft Teams has closed captioning
- Kidsability continues to receive referrals from families and partners as usual but physical locations have been closed and are using a virtual care model; this week started transitioning back to physical appts for some clients (only at the Waterloo office for now) and plan to do a hybrid model of this
- Reception House - are not receiving new arrivals in the near future; are working remotely and has not a big stretch as much of our work was mobile anyway, though adds complexity; there are some interesting and positive aspects of virtual
  - challenging to stay on top of all the ways that other organizations are operating so we can refer clients; challenging for some people to be housebound and no children's programming - particularly over the summer
  - Youth program offering virtual homework support; exploring options re. online camp during the summer
- IP has been working with municipalities around translation and interpretation (BSG Welcoming Municipalities working group)

#### 4. Next Meetings

- Jun 23, 1-2.30pm virtually on Zoom
- Sep 22, 1-3pm at ...TBD
- Nov 24-3pm at MCC (50 Kent Ave)

# SETTLE STEERING GROUP

## Minutes

**Date:** June 23, 2020

**Time:** 1:00-2:30 p.m.

**Location:** Zoom virtual meeting

**Present:** Eliseo Martell (Chair, Community Member), Laura Stoutenburg (Vice-Chair, Conestoga College), Ana Luz Martinez (KWMC), Anna Schwarz (YMCA Immigrant Services), Eda Dede (Sanctuary), Pauleen Payne & Janet Waito (St Louis), Stephanie Schreuders & Kaylee Perez (MCC), Sheri Follett (Big Brothers Big Sisters), Rachael Lake & Imtenan Abd-El-Razik (WRCLS), Chris Buuck (Conestoga College), Aracy Selvakumar (Reception House), Abiha Syed & Dan Vandebelt (Immigration Partnership staff)

**Regrets & Resource Members:** Hoda Ghonim (SHORE), Marian Rozman (YMCA Immigrant Services), Debbie Engel (Carizon), Jarvis Sparks (KPL), Priscilla Muzira (ACCKWA), Rana Shami (KidsAbility), Siba Al-Khadour (Levant Canada), Nermin Ozdemir (House of Friendship, Family Outreach Worker Program), Sanjay Govindaraj (ROW- Citizen Service), Sherry White (ROW – Housing), Lynne Griffiths-Fulton (Reception House), Diane McGregor (KW Counselling Services), Kris Marchetti & Jennifer Staples & Crystal Swinton (ROW- Public Health), Shelley Campagnola (MCRS), Gael Gilbert (SHOW), Carolyn Beukeboom (CFFM), Sarah Badran & Barb Van Giessen (The Working Centre), Jennifer Ardon (Canadian Lutheran World Relief), Sakina Kirefu-Khan (GRH), Ed Kaut (ROW-Income Support), Sarah MacIver (UWaterloo School of Optometry), Liliana Araujo (Community Member), Roger Gilbert (ROW- Children’s Services)

### 1. Welcome & Introductions

### 2. Approval of Agenda & Review of Minutes (May 26, 2020)

- Agenda approved. It would be useful to discuss resumption planning at some point as things restart and immigration eventually opens up.
- Minutes approved.

### 3. IP Updates

- Eliseo and Dan shared an update about IP activities, including anti-racism efforts discussion at the last Council meeting.
  - The Belong Steering Group (BSG) is continuing their efforts to promote welcoming and inclusive communities and address racism. This is something that involves all of IP. BSG and IP Council are planning to work with others to develop a Waterloo Region anti-racism strategy as a community-wide effort. IP Council (with BSG) will be developing a formal statement on anti-racism and the current conversations about Black Lives Matter.
  - The IP Leadership Team (which includes Chair/Vice-chair of Council and each of the 3 steering groups) will meet in July to discuss next steps and process around a formal statement and developing a community anti-racism strategy.
  - The media has a very important role and significantly affects people’s attitudes and stereotypes. Any plan has to involve the media and move toward more positive and balanced coverage.
  - We need to consult and to follow the lead of the black, racialized and indigenous communities. It also needs to involve how newcomers see indigenous peoples. ACB network has been a leader in this effort locally. CORRIC could be an advocacy partner.
  - To what degree might there be a conflict and opportunities with having Waterloo Region Police Services on IP Council?
  - The BSG has a key role and we should consider how SSG can join BSG and Council.

- We will plan an extra meeting in late July (after the IP Leadership Team meeting) to discuss anti-racism efforts as well as service resumption planning.
- SSG Chair and Vice Chair roles
  - The SSG Chair serves a 2-year term and at the end of that term the Vice Chair moves into the Chair role and we receive nominations for Vice Chair role.
  - A huge thank you to Eliseo for leading us for the last 2 years as Chair of the SSG. Laura is willing to move from Vice Chair into the Chair role.
  - All are invited to nominate themselves or someone else in the group that they think would be a great Vice Chair by Friday July 3<sup>rd</sup>. If there are multiple people who are interested we will vote electronically before our September SSG meeting.
  - The Vice Chair role is to act as a backup for the Chair as required (chairing SSG meetings or otherwise if the Chair can't make it), and working with the Chair and staff to develop meeting agendas and other tasks. See the IP Governance Document on the IP website for more details of the role (<http://www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/landing/Immigration-Partnership-Governance-Document.pdf> page 23).

#### 4. Community Action Plan (CAP) Planning

- We have a new CAP that outlines our strategies over the next 5 years, which we approved this spring. However, it was high level and we need to bring that down to specifics.
- What do we want to accomplish together over the next 6 months and the next 2 years? Given all the uncertainty and change these days, we may not be at a place where we can nail everything down completely. This is a first stab and we can continue to fill it in as things settle over the coming months.
- The group broke into 2 breakout small groups. All took the first couple minutes to silently add their ideas to the shared document [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1StM0ZlQlcpImUoU9C4RFo7FK5xLsb4XgPqpzi31Zt\\_o/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1StM0ZlQlcpImUoU9C4RFo7FK5xLsb4XgPqpzi31Zt_o/edit?usp=sharing), then discussed and continued adding in small groups before coming back as a large group.
- All can add additional ideas afterwards and we will invite others who couldn't make it to the meeting to add their thoughts as well. We will come back to this at a future meeting.
- The breakout rooms were useful (particularly adding ideas individually first) and it was helpful to see the other group ideas during the process. Discussing racism beforehand informed the conversation.

#### 5. Community Updates

- Eliseo shared about migrant workers and the health challenges of this group. Eliseo could possibly do a presentation at a future meeting. WRCLS has been working with Jennifer Phanning and looking to reach out more to this group. If there are legal issues about employment, EI, etc. feel free to refer migrant worker clients to WRCLS.
- KWMC is still working virtually but will be starting commissioner services in person, and eventually other in-person services for clients that have challenges with internet access etc. When the libraries open that will allow other settlement services there. The virtual KW Multicultural Festival is on now (<https://kwmulticultural.ca>).
- Are there any agencies offering phone or internet access for people to use? The Psychosocial Supports Pandemic Response group has discussed this but it doesn't appear that there is anything at this point. Abiha is on a subgroup that has been struck to explore this and will share information with the SSG. Tech/phone/web access needs to be seen as an essential service.

#### 6. Next Meetings

- Dan to send out a doodle poll to find a meeting date at the end of July to discuss service resumption planning as well as to continue the conversation about anti-racism efforts.
- Sep 22, 1-2.30pm virtually on Zoom
- Nov 24, 1-3pm
- It was suggested that we may want to consider continuing to have virtual meetings going forward for environmental reasons.

# SETTLE STEERING GROUP

## Minutes

**Date:** Sep 22, 2020

**Time:** 1:00-2:30 p.m.

**Location:** Zoom virtual meeting

**Present:** Laura Stoutenburg (Vice-Chair, Conestoga College), Stephanie Schreuders (MCC), Chris Buuck (Conestoga College), Pauleen Payne & Janet Waito (St Louis), Lidia Gomez (English at First), Ana Luz Martinez (KWMC), Anna Schwarz (YMCA Immigrant Services), Gael Gilbert (SHOW), Eda Dede (Sanctuary), Debbie Engel (Carizon), Jarvis Sparks (KPL), Priscilla Muzira (ACCKWA), Rana Shami (KidsAbility), Rachael Lake & Imtenan Abd-El-Razik (WRCLS), Carolyn Beukeboom (CFFM), Sanjay Govindaraj (ROW- Citizen Service), Lynne Griffiths-Fulton (Reception House), Vanessa Lopak (City of Cambridge), Linda Terry (Community Member), Abiha Syed & Dan Vandebelt (Immigration Partnership staff)

**Regrets & Resource Members:** Eliseo Martell (Chair, Community Member), Hoda Ghonim (SHORE), Diane McGregor (KW Counselling Services), Kris Marchetti & Jennifer Staples & Crystal Swinton (ROW- Public Health), Shelley Campagnola (MCRS), Marian Rozman (YMCA Immigrant Services), Sheri Follett (Big Brothers Big Sisters), Sherry White (ROW – Housing), Siba Al-Khadour (Levant Canada), Nermin Ozdemir (House of Friendship, Family Outreach Worker Program), Sarah Badran & Barb Van Giessen (The Working Centre), Jennifer Ardon (Canadian Lutheran World Relief), Sakina Kirefu-Khan (GRH), Ed Kaut (ROW-Income Support), Sarah MacIver (UWaterloo School of Optometry), Liliana Araujo (Community Member), Roger Gilbert (ROW- Children’s Services)

### 1. Welcome

- Linda Terry has been involved with IP Council for many years
- Lidia Gomez from English at First is joining for updates on language learning programming

### 2. Approval of Agenda & Review of Minutes (May 26 & Aug 6, 2020)

- Agenda approved. Both minutes approved.

### 3. Introductions and Roundtable Updates

- MCC - Starting in March arrivals had stopped but September 2 families have now arrived – slowly travel resuming for privately sponsored refugees; working with sponsors re quarantine, etc. Allies in Refugee Integration (ARI) pilot has MCC working with YMCA to enhance the relationships between settlement and private sponsors - in January started 3-way case management model including pre-arrival meetings with sponsors (many sponsor groups haven’t known how to work with settlement providers)
- SHOW – Supportive Housing of Waterloo - Bought Civitan building with 24 units of affordable housing for seniors; currently have 3 vacancies (note they are not accessible – with stairs) - 2 bachelors and 1 bedroom; if you know of seniors (55y+) that may be a good fit contact Gael Gilbert by email [gael.gilbert@showwaterloo.org](mailto:gael.gilbert@showwaterloo.org)
- Carizon - Promise of Partnership – supporting mental health of refugees; have an educator providing training for service agencies re refugees (available to any agency that requires); some groups (youth, women, men, seniors) and a new piece is individual trauma-stabilization counselling; have been doing virtually but have just resumed face to face when required; reach out to Debbie if questions [dengel@carizon.ca](mailto:dengel@carizon.ca)
  - KW4 OHT (Ontario Health Team) has a focus on refugees and mental health; there is a working group –contact Debbie if interested
- YMCA Immigrant Services - Providing service virtually but are exploring in-person possibly in October; SWIS (Settlement Workers in Schools) providing virtual support and in schools (limited in person); are providing language assessments online now - don’t have any waitlist for assessments

- though keeping a list of people who will need in-person assessments when that resumes; are now assessing writing as well (for a while had the online assessment tool but it didn't include writing); literacy clients is where there is the challenge to do the assessment – as they need to pass the digital screen; running English and French conversation circles, citizenship programs, mentorship program, and services in KW, Cambridge and Stratford; a new program is Canada Connects (similar to the previous host program)
- Sanctuary - doing virtual and in-person visits; some mental health programs are starting again
  - Region of Waterloo - ROW working on anti-racism efforts and are launching the application process for an anti-racism working group to develop an antiracism plan and secretariat; selection process designed by BIPOC communities; this was shared by Dan earlier – please promote/share; launching InSight app with video interpretation through Language Line – haven't trained staff yet but the agreements is finalized
  - WR Community Legal Services - office opened 2 weeks ago – by appt only; virtual also continues; time limits were suspended during the pandemic and are now running again (e.g. time limits to submit information in the course of immigration applications, etc.)
  - ACCKWA - office is open M-F by appt only; most work is virtual still
  - CFFM – Centre for Family Medicine, Refugee Health Clinic - providing primary care in person with some phone calls now; Reception House has just welcomed about 30 people in the last few weeks and CFFM has seen them virtually during their 14 day isolation period
  - KPL - all KPL locations are open but with limited capacity; all collections are open including ESL collections; printing and photocopying and WIFI available; all programs are online (conversation circles, etc); don't have settlement workers in the libraries and no tours but libraries can visit programs for orientations
  - Reception House - have resumed new arrivals; quarantining families for 14 days; one family has finished that and is moving into 101 David; 145 people in the pipeline – no definite travel plans but things are ramping up for GARs; office is not open for clients or walk-ins but some training/orientations; will try to be as remote as possible for other services – case management supports and other programs; in-person on a case by case basis for more urgent priority
  - City of Cambridge - First time in this capacity in the SSG; are launching a new IRCC funded – Cambridge outreach program with Greenway and Kinbridge neighbourhood organizations focusing on outreach/support to newcomer seniors and youth; started recruitment for the outreach workers and another position at the City to coordinate the program and set up a conference in Cambridge (likely virtual)
  - KWMC - continue working virtually by phone and online; working on in-person for people who need that though not sure re dates; the commissioner of oaths is in-person once a week – esp for seniors that need that (10-12pm in another location by appt only); youth programs continue (and will be partnering with the Cambridge Idea Exchange – though for all WR because it is virtual
  - Dan shared an update from Shelley from MCRS - activity is slow with respect to new refugee claimants; remain busy with over 1,600 people still in our system; is a very slow trickle across the border, and only those who meet the standard of the Safe Third Country Agreement; those that have already been in Canada and now are seeking to make a claim are also much lower in numbers than pre-COVID; hearings and other processes have begun again, but it will be a long time before most of the people we work with will have a hearing; we are working to be able to host virtual hearings at our office (October?)

#### 4. Language Learning Updates

- English at First ESL (Lidia) - Few challenges for September – using a hybrid model with classes on site for lower levels (literacy and CLB 1) and rest of classes (CLB-2-4) online during the week (morning/aft and seniors in afternoon online); so far there is good registration interest; will be doing technology training for students onsite from Sep 21 to Oct 2 – many students were accessing online classes but having difficulties – so training is for them to help them to access

- online classes; childcare will be available on site for in-person classes; classes start in early October; most of the former students have registered but we are getting lots of phone calls of others – applications are ongoing; can call the school (Patricia) and they will give an appt for on-site registration (registration is on-site by appt only); will update our website with this information
- St Louis LINC/ESL (Janet/Pauleen) - Classes started Sep 14 – teachers have been working with students to get them connected and learning to use the tech. then moving into English learning. Online registration; register online if at all possible (though phone also possible); have spaces in all class times –morning afternoons and Saturdays; will be moving back to St Francis but the renos are delayed so all St Frances and Saturday classes are online; literacy and CLB1 are hybrid – 2 cohorts on different days and online when they aren't in class; CLB 2-7 and citizenship and ITLS are all online; have waived the \$10 material fee; tech is a challenge for some students; St Louis has some devices that they are loaning out but not enough; goal is to get literacy and CLB1 using tech in the classroom so they can be virtual if we need to in the future; any ideas about tech please share; are doing synchronous learning (all on at the same time with Google Meet); LINC: we do have spaces though not all spaces showing up - going through class lists now; have space with childminding at Highland; have LINC classes hybrid home/in-person; do need computers; need interpreter/translator support for literacy-CLB 3, esp Arabic and who understand google classroom; if clients have had difficulty can call LINC ext directly 519 745- 1201 ext LINC 224, 400, ESL: 245, 229, 636; if they don't speak English well enough over the phone can go to main campus (St. Mary's Campus, 77 Young St 8:30am-12:30pm and Mon/Tue 6-7pm) or Highland (Highland office hours 8:30-1:00pm) and knock on the door; <https://stlouis.wcdsb.ca>
  - Conestoga College LINC (Chris) - 100% remote and likely not in the classroom until 2021 sometime; ran LINC program in the summer – 7 classes and had highest attendance rate ever; have a model with both synchronous and asynchronous learning; had a week of prof devt for faculty teams for supporting students (online, etc.); summer we piloted fillable form for registration; normally we have 600 seats; have a waitlist for our classes and will be calling them; have developed Zoom instructional materials for our learners – in multiple languages; will be onboarding with all students at the beginning; using Zoom and OneDrive; for literacy and CLB1-2 are using Whatsapp (and doing prof devt for staff to expand use of Whatsapp); have had guest speakers over the summer and will continue that; childminding will continue remotely with community partners
  - Is there a central place to find this information? Maybe the language provider supervisors (and Anna for YMCA Language Assessment) need to discuss how to gather all of our information and share with folks
  - Can registration be done on-line as opposed to in-person so that agencies can provide interpretation?
  - Some students have said they can't attend because they don't have a computer - sometimes the children are using the one computer they have so the adult learner don't have one; some students are doing all their classes on their phones – are still learning even if that isn't ideal for many; VIG computers or related refurbished computers may be options; could we access funding or approach IRCC?

## 5. IP Updates

- We just finished an update on public perceptions of immigration to update the original survey from January 2019 with new data from January 2020 and June 2020 during the pandemic; notable that it does not show an uptick in anti-immigrant sentiment as a result of COVID <https://www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca/en/business-opportunities/resources/Publications/Public-Perceptions-of-Immigration-in-Waterloo-Region-Sept-2020.pdf>
- IP is planning to do an update to the partner survey this fall – gathering information about the issues you are seeing, ideas, demographic changes, etc and then to compile and share it

- IP Council continues to explore anti-racism and where IP can work with others across the community working on these things

#### 6. SSG Chair & Vice Chair

- IP Governance process is to have a chair and vice-chair for the SSG on 2 year terms with the vice chair moving into the chair role at the end of the chair's term. **MOTION: Janet moved to approve Laura Stoutenburg as SSG Chair; Debbie seconded; passed**
- We had a call for nominations for the vice chair role after our last meeting in June. Stephanie Schreuders from MCC was nominated. **MOTION: Lynne moved to approve Stephanie Schreuders as SSG Vice Chair; Anna seconded; passed**

#### 7. Community Action Plan (CAP) Work Planning

- In June we [started to brainstorm](#) about SSG work plan activities and what we want to focus on over the next 6 months and 2 years; we will come back to this at our November SSG meeting
- We will have a small group look at what we came up with in June and where are the gaps that we might want to discuss further in November. Laura, Stephanie, Dan, Debbie, Anna and Lynne volunteered. **ACTION: Contact Dan if you are also interested in this small group discussion.**

#### 8. How are we working together?

- Discussed how specifically can we work really well together and support each other better
- Networking and updates at these meetings is quite valuable and can lead to further collaboration and connecting with a broader range of people/groups.
- It is difficult to stay on top of the day to day changes in services - so we can direct clients appropriately. The Immigration Waterloo Region Weekly is a good starting point – we need to keep that information updated and pass info/changes to IP. Is there one place (Google Doc?) where we all keep our own information up to date? It could be useful to just have the contact information for each organization/program if partners want to connect if they have questions.

#### 9. Next Meetings

- Nov 24, 1-2.30pm (Zoom)

# SETTLE STEERING GROUP

## Minutes

**Date:** Nov 24, 2020

**Time:** 1:00-2:30 p.m.

**Location:** Zoom virtual meeting

**Present:** Laura Stoutenburg (Chair, Conestoga College), Stephanie Schreuders (MCC), Chris Buuck (Conestoga College), Pauleen Payne & Janet Waito (St Louis), Ana Luz Martinez (KWMC), Anna Schwarz (YMCA Immigrant Services), Eda Dede (Sanctuary), Jarvis Sparks (KPL), Priscilla Muzira (ACCKWA), Rachael Lake (WRCLS), Aracy Selvakumar (Reception House), Nermin Ozdemir (House of Friendship, Family Outreach Worker Program), Linda Terry (Community Member), Charlene Mak (ISAG & WLU), Massah Tarawalley (Kind Minds), Dan Vandebelt & Bedri Unal (Immigration Partnership staff)

**Regrets & Resource Members:** Eliseo Martell (Community Member), Lidia Gomez (English at First), Hoda Ghonim (SHORE), Diane McGregor (KW Counselling Services), Lynne Griffiths-Fulton (Reception House), Debbie Engel (Carizon), & Imtenan Abd-El-Razik (WRCLS), Kris Marchetti & Jennifer Staples & Crystal Swinton (ROW- Public Health), Carolyn Beukeboom (CFFM), Joe-Ann McComb (Kinbridge Neighbourhood Association), Sanjay Govindaraj (ROW- Citizen Service), Shelley Campagnola (MCRS), Marian Rozman (YMCA Immigrant Services), Rana Shami (KidsAbility), Gael Gilbert (SHOW), Sheri Follett (Big Brothers Big Sisters), Sherry White (ROW – Housing), Siba Al-Khadour (Levant Canada), Sarah Badran & Barb Van Giessen (The Working Centre), Jennifer Ardon (Canadian Lutheran World Relief), Sakina Kirefu-Khan (GRH), Ed Kaut (ROW-Income Support), Sarah MacIver (UWaterloo School of Optometry), Liliana Araujo (Community Member), Roger Gilbert (ROW- Children's Services)

### 1. Welcome

- Welcome to Massah Tarawalley from Kind Minds Family Wellness and Charlene Mak from the International Student Advisory Group joining the SSG.

### 2. Approval of Agenda & Review of Minutes (Sep 22, 2020)

- Agenda and minutes approved.

### 3. SSG Business

- Territorial acknowledgement:
  - Stephanie suggested including a territorial acknowledgement in our SSG meetings. It is a starting point and impetus to continue to explore and take deeper action individually and collectively. **ACTION: Dan will share the territorial acknowledgement by email as well as additional resources.**
- Advisory Chair Role:
  - Laura noted that over the coming months we will be exploring some significant issues like racism and continually exploring how to ensure we are involving diverse perspectives in our work. While both the SSG chair and vice chair (Laura and Stephanie) came to Canada as children, none of them or Dan as staff support can speak personally to racialized experiences.
  - We discussed having an SSG advisory chair role. The role could be for rotating 6-month terms to allow SSG members to more easily step into the role and contribute their ideas without it being a more onerous long term commitment for them. For this role we would specifically look to involve people who can provide perspectives that might not be currently present in the chair or vice chair role. At this point we would specifically be looking for racialized individuals (ideally immigrant as well, though not required). The

chair, vice chair and advisory chair would all contribute to initial brainstorming about SSG directions/ideas, developing meeting agendas, etc.

- There was support for moving forward with this. **ACTION: Let Dan, Laura or Stephanie know if you are interested in this role at some point in the future.**
- SSG Work Plan 2020/2021
  - Laura reviewed the process to develop the current work plan draft (SSG initial brainstorming in June, small group to identify gaps, incorporating recently identified and current activities). Thanks to small group for their insights - Laura, Stephanie, Debbie, Anna, Lynne and Dan.
  - We reviewed the activities noted in the current work plan draft, with some comments about higher or lower priority items. Many of the current activities address clearly identified needs (i.e. interpretation tasks identified in the Ontario Health Team development process). Some ad hoc activities are on the back burner during the pandemic but it is useful to include them when needs arise (i.e. workplace language learning).
  - **ACTION: Dan to send the [link to the draft work plan document](#) and all to review from their perspective and ensure we are capturing the kind of strategies we need to be working on to move our collective work forward.**

#### 4. Introductions and Roundtable Updates

- Laura updated on IP Council discussions including continuing conversations about anti-racism efforts, Evaluation Advisory Committee, etc.
- Dan shared that the Belong Steering Group (BSG) has been working on anti-racism activities including creating a website for all Waterloo Region anti-racism links and resources: [www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca/racialequitywr.ca](http://www.immigrationwaterlooregion.ca/racialequitywr.ca)
- Reception House – 3 families in temporary accommodation
- MCC – a few arrivals so far and 8 families arriving in the next few weeks
- ISAC (Charlene Mak (cmak@wlu.ca) from the International Student Advisory Group and WLU) – noted that WLU and the other local post-secondary institutions have been given the go-ahead to receive international students again; have many international students coming or soon to come; ISAC came together about a year and a half ago and includes international student advisors from post-secondary institutions in the area (UW, WLU, Conestoga, UGuelph, UWO); Dan attended ISAC meeting with discussion about partnerships with settlement providers and gaps; it would be useful to have further conversations with ISAC and settlement agencies about gaps for international students and responses
- Conestoga – have clarified their onboarding process for newcomers starting LINC (demos/training, procedures); have distributed total of 50 laptops; Conestoga is also now receiving international students
- St Louis ESL – loaning out 55-60 chromebooks; have virtual learning (one-to-one) support for identified students that might be struggling – has been very successful; space in many classes or very small waitlists; most classes are online but literacy and CLB1 are in-person; St Francis site is opening soon; St Louis LINC – distributed 44 Chromebooks
- Linda – Age Friendly Committee – working with GRT on a video about how to ride a bus (Linda will share); advocacy with ROW re housing for older adults (incl immigrants)
- KWMC – still providing services remotely; were offering commissioner services in-person but ended that with shift to pandemic red level; hope to offer again when we move to orange; hope to provide face-to-face in the new year in libraries
- Kind Minds – Kind Minds Family Wellness (<https://kindmindsfamilywellness.org>) is a new organization in Waterloo Region that focuses on supporting the health and wellness of Black identifying families in Kitchener Waterloo and area, with a particular focus on supporting Black identifying immigrants and refugees.

- Sanctuary – still using hybrid of in-person and virtual services depending on patient need; Family Violence Initiative with porch chats in multiple languages “Impact of Migration on Families and the added Risks During Covid 19” (<https://preventingcrime.ca/2020/07/02/keepfamilysafe-coalitions-launch-2>)
- WRCLS – still doing phone appts but some in-person as needed (can get notes notarised, etc); connected with a group of migrant workers and will be assisting them to apply for open work permits; where to refer these workers that are currently under closed work permits?
- House of Friendship – Family Outreach Program is providing services remotely
- Would it be useful to include an exploration of temporary resident/international student supports in the SSG work plan? Health and social service support gaps were noted – particularly in the transition between international student and temporary work permit stages. It would be valuable to have a separate meeting to discuss gaps and supports. **ACTION: Eda, Nermin, Ana Luz and Charlene to connect about gaps, with any others that are interested. Contact Dan if interested in participating.**

## 5. Next Meetings

- Proposed 2021 meetings (4th Tuesday, 1-2.30pm) on Feb 23, Apr27, Jun 29, Sep 28, Nov 23