



Unite for Good

WEEKLY MEETING Minutes
Wednesday, April 15, 2026

Frank Adamson, Paul Allen, Bob Eamer, Hugh Graham, Don Haber, Philip Hanna, Annie Holtby, Fred Leppard, Randy Momot, Carolyn Mullin, Dave Schulz, Dave Sherlock, Paul Snack, Mike Taylor, Guest Speaker – Stephen Cooper, Comfort Bears

1. Welcome to Stephen Cooper, Executive Director, Comfort Bears

2. Land Acknowledgement – Mike

We begin this gathering by acknowledging the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples, many of whom continue to live and work here today. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and is within the land protected by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum agreement. Today this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Metis and Inuit people and acknowledging reminds us that our great standard of living is directly related to the resources and friendship of Indigenous people

3. National Anthem– ALL with Carolyn leading

4. 4-WAY TEST – Randy

Of the things we think, say, or do
 Is it the truth?
 Is it fair to all concerned?
 Will it build good will and better friendships?
 Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

Invocation – Carolyn

With our friends beside us, and no person beneath us,
 With the bonds of Rotary between us, and our worries behind us,
 With our goals before us, and no task beyond us,
 With a thirst for knowledge, and a dream for a polio-free world,
 We are thankful for our Rotary friends.

6. Announcements.

Hugh. Home Show has come and gone. 1600 over the two days.
PH Evening. April 30 deadline for nominations for PHF.

Cornhole Tournament. There's a link online for sponsors, signups. Keep plugging away.

Frank. We'll be at **Library** after meeting for our donation of first \$5000 – everyone is welcome. **Changeover** at a public presentation next week.

Fred. Is on line!

FDTN Grants. We didn't apply for Grant this year but will the following year. Niagara Conservation Authority? Tablets for AK Wigg?

Paul S. There's a Cornhole meeting at Mossimo's on Thursday. We'll review Cornhole notes. Flyers handed out last week. Cornhole is a kids' program. We could give ½ to them.

Hugh. Contacted Tim (Welland Club) and there will be no golf tournament this year. Too busy for joint tournament.

7. Today's Presentation is by Stephen Cooper, Executive Director, Comfort Bears.

Welcome, Stephen!

Stephen.

"Human Beings First! Raise funds, then back to the kids. Comfort Bears in run by It was founded in 2020 on the basis that no child should face trauma alone. We give away 4,000 bears a year. It turned out to be a grounding element with Paramedics!

Wellspring has bears for kids and teens; Hospice Niagara in Welland and St Catharines makes it a soft place to land. **Kristen French**, a safe space offering safety and reassurance. **Niagara Children's Centre**, physical development, communication delays.

Pathstone, Italian Café loading cars for Pathstone, a sense of safety.

It's Service above Self, Community Impact, Supporting Youth, Partnership and Action.

Tags are the human element behind the bears. They make sure the healing journey continues. We have a 'Tag and Bag' day. WE don't always see the kid get the bear.

I'm 70 days in as executive director. Our fundraising provides our entire budget. It's mainly from grass roots although **we have one major donor** at \$40,000.

Paul. How to kids get one? **Stephen.** We have to trust the staff or we're adding to their workload. If kid has a teddy in front of him, it's hard to deny him. **Grief and trauma is tough. You need trust.**

Stephen. We're going to have a form – there's an expectation to report. I was glad to see the invitation from Ronald McDonald Family Room.

Frank. What's the present number of volunteers for 'bag and tag'? **Stephen.** 5 or 6 people. **Some could write the tags. We meet at our Ancaster Office.**

Frank. Thank you so much, Stephen.

8. Next Meetings

April 22. No Weekly Meeting.

April 29. Board Meeting, First Floor Concession, Everyone welcome.

May 6. Weekly Meeting. Toutie presenting and Habitat for Humanity, Madeline Gerbracht – a Double Header