



## WEEKLY MEETING Minutes

Wednesday, May 14, 2025

Collins Acheampong, Frank Adamson, Hugh Graham, Mel Groom, Paul Hewitt, Annie Holtby, Dave Schulz, David Sherlock, Paul Snack, Mike Taylor, Maria Araujo, Guest Speaker – Kim Rossi of Kristen French Centre.

1. **Welcome!**

2. **Land Acknowledgement – Paul H**

*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 – Mel and All**

4. **4-WAY TEST – Mel**

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?  
Cheers, everyone!

5. **Invocation – Hugh**

**Let's** be thankful for what we have.

Rotarians,  
Observe  
Then  
Act  
Responsibly  
Yourselves

6. **Key Events**

**Paul Harris Evening.** Everything is proceeding. If you're thinking of coming, please register for June 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Paul S. Cornhole Tournament.** Performance Toyota is our major sponsor at \$2500. Zabcor Transport Trucking is bringing their truck simulator!

**Mike.** Those who can meet at EL Crossley for a photo op for **the Interact Donation of \$400 toward the Autoclave.**

**Frank.** President's Changeover is now scheduled at Sons & Daughters' Winery on July 9<sup>th</sup>. Aaron, our 2025-26 District Governor, is planning to come to the changeover.

**Grant for Trees.** We have some for Lions (16), down from an initial 200! There are still 30 slated for EL Crossley. NPCA will plant 300 trees from the grant in Burgoyne Woods. Please sign up if you'd like to be part of that planting!

**Lance.** Canada Day is coming. Please sign up if you can help!

7. **Today's Presentation –Mel introduced our speaker.** She and Kim Rossi met 2 years ago. There was a new fundraiser at MT Bellies raising money for a new hospital. Kim, who'd spent 20 years in Radio in Metropolitan areas, was sharing her experiences at college. Her passion is now fundraising at the **Kristen French Centre. Welcome Kim!**

**Kim's Presentation.** We turned the Trauma Centre into an Advanced Centre there for Children and youth. It was the **only Child Advocacy between here and Toronto!** When families come in, it's not for good, it's for victims of human trafficking, young girls without a stable home life but with low self-esteem. **We record the child's story.** The Centre has lots of coloured area rugs, etc.

**The Interview Room is a little more stark – we don't want there to be distractions.** There are two officers in the observation area. The therapist is also watching. We have wrap around services. Through Art Therapy and Play Therapy, there's a therapist's assessment.

Total Refund Amount: -67.01 here's an assessment of the therapist.

We have **partnerships with Niagara Regional Police.** A staff member shepherds them through the court system. Often abuse is happening in the family. In a family of 6, the mother was the abuser. She is now separated from the family and the father is raising the 6 children.

**After program, we rebuild trust.** We have summer camp and a march program in Welland, Grimsby, St Catharines, Niagara Falls that costs \$25 /week. Other programs include our

**Prevention Program for 300 kids in Niagara.** Some do short or long time sessions. DSBN and Niagara Catholic participate – K-12 – we educate the kids, build awareness and stay safe with online contact. The kids are certified by experts. **We teach what are safe secrets to tell.** We deal with the **topic of human trafficking for the older grades.** It's a healthy relationship. The teachers love it and social workers can go into the classes and give information.

\$22,000 was invested to get more schools into this program – training staff, travel expenses.

4000 were seen last year and 8000 this year. Their approach? **Any child who needs help gets it!**

We pay the social worker \$150/session. We can't wait! **Our Brave Hearts Gala is November 7<sup>th</sup>** – at the Central Community Centre. **The goal is getting children back to 'normal.'**

**Hugh** Anyone who needs attention gets it? Is there any kind of backlog?

**Kim** Police are involved. Anytime we need access to their site, we get it right away. We would like to see prevention. Camp 225 – every kid gets one week. It's 'X' per week per counter. David S Howes – we could get another support worker and pay staff to deliver the program. **There is NO Government funding!** The Justice Ministry has some money for kids going through the court system. It's One Million \$ for yearly operational costs. In the past, \$400,000 was raised to maintain. We'd like an additional site in Welland with a shower, etc.

**Question. Have you used the Safety Village?** For a Senior Program.

**Dave.** I've attended an online course with Big Brothers/Big Sisters. Do you do adult programming?

**Kim.** There are 12 participating in the David Howes program. We're looking at 'did we have the right picture?' How can we go back and ask for more? The Big Thinking is to host town hall meetings with **topics like How to be Aware of a Child being Abused.** Get numbers up to 200 at a time

**They do support Halton!** They can do things at a distance.

**Dave.** At start, a child had to talk, to repeat their story. The Centre wanted a more relaxed environment. **The story will change the more times you tell it! First is the best! Children** don't have to testify in court. A sibling can talk at the Centre, not the court.

**Collins.** When kids fall through the cracks?

**Kim.** FACS refers, Police refer. NJI Child Advocacy Centres are there now. Talking about National institutions are typically not well known. Kristen brings causes to the community's attention.

**Crystal.** What caused you to change your career path?

**Kim.** I worked for Pathstone for 6 ½ years. I like to build and need. I was the Acting Director of Development and **only soliciting on their behalf.**

## 8. Rotary Moment and Loonies.

**Maria.** NY was really fun! Times Square, Broadway Show, Statue of Liberty, Hell's Kitchen.

**Frank.** Thanks so much!

**Hugh.** Thanks! So much to know! I've been thinking about thinking of someone you want to have a coffee with since April Feasby passed. We were supposed to get together and never did. Don't let a coffee pass you by.

**Paul S.** Thanks! You never get feedback from school re son! Re the coffee, I've made a date for June 3<sup>rd</sup>!

**Mike.** Appreciate your work with the Kristen French Centre. I did go up to NY with a 5 am start. 65,000 steps over the weekend! The energy of kids is wonderful! Andrew Larmand did the notarizing for the students but took time to share his own story.

**Dave Sch.** The number of kids affected is amazing! Going into the schools is great!

**Annie.** Thinking of Peter's kids going through Kristen French times and the need for locks on the door before they could feel settled.

**Dave Sh.** I appreciate the proactive process of NRPS!

**Paul H.** Great program. I remember when kids had a problem and were told to keep it a secret.

**Mel.** Kim, it's lovely to see your passion.

**Collins.** One of the things that strikes me is the idea that we all want to do something. Every place needs money. Love the program of going into the schools. Thank you for coming!

**Enjoy.**

## 9. Meetings to come

**May 21, Weekly Meeting, Guest Speaker, Eric Baldwin, Manager Land Planning, NPCA**

**May 28, Board Meeting, Concession Area Main Floor, All Members Welcome**