



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING IMMIGRANT WOMEN SERVICES OTTAWA

Virtually via Zoom
October 27, 2020 at 6:00pm

1. Call to Order/Welcome

- Mechthild Meyer, Chair of the IWSO Board of Directors, welcomed attendees as they joined the meeting and asked them to introduce themselves in the chat line.
- Mechthild Meyer called the Annual General Meeting (AGM) to order.
- Sadaf Kachalia, Vice Chair of the IWSO Board of Directors and moderator of the AGM, guided participants through the general rules of the meeting and how the voting and question/comment function will work. Sadaf launched a test motion.

2. Approval of Agenda for the October 27, 2020 AGM

Mechthild Meyer moved to approve the Agenda for the IWSO Annual General Meeting 2020. Patricia Begin seconded the motion. 93% voted in favor and 7% abstained. All in favour. **Carried.**

3. Approval of the Minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting

Mechthild Meyer moved to approve the Minutes of IWSO's 2019 AGM. Barbara Amona and Lori-Ann McDonald seconded the motion. 72% voted in favor and 28% abstained. All in favour. **Carried.**

4. Executive Director's Report

Mercy Lawluvi, Executive Director, highlighted IWSO's achievements and challenges in the past year:

- In the first 3 quarters of the 2019-2020 fiscal year, IWSO provided client-centered services and targeted programming to close to 3,000 immigrant and racialized women and their children. After March 2020, IWSO seamlessly transitioned to providing virtual services to clients.
- IWSO strengthened existing partnerships and established new ones to better serve clients. For example, IWSO collaborated with World Skills Employment Centre to implement an employment program tailored for immigrant and racialized women in order to facilitate their social and economic integration. In addition, IWSO entered into a new partnership with the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) for the delivery of their new project "Building Leadership Capacity to Address Gender Based Violence Against Non-status, Refugee and Immigrant Women. IWSO continued its partnership with City for All Women's Initiative (CAWI) on the Women Reducing Poverty Together project. This year, a document "A Place to Call Home" was produced through the collaboration of all the partners of the project. Thirdly, IWSO partnered with the Women's Economic Council in the hosting of "Her Own Boss" program which focused on entrepreneurship for immigrant women. Lastly IWSO partnered with Kids Up Front – a not for profit organization that collects tickets to arts, cultural and sporting events and redistributes to children and families for free.
- IWSO received a five-year grant of \$200,000 from the department of Women and Gender Equality Canada to build a structure to diversity funding and close the salary gap for the staff

- Mercy thanked all funders and donors, board of directors, staff, interpreters, and volunteers for their continued support.

5. Board Chair's Report

Mechthild Meyer provided Board Chair's Report by thanking the Executive Director for her extraordinary leadership and managers of each department and all staff for their dedication and hard work. She also expressed gratitude for all members of the Board as well as the broad membership.

- Mechthild Meyer provided an overview of IWSO Organizational Structure, Board Committees and diverse profile of Board of Directors: born in 13 countries with different professional background
- Mechthild Meyer summarized key accomplishments of the Board during the past year: adapted to COVID-19 guidelines holding meetings virtually; reviewed and adapted policies to reflect the new realities of working and meeting off-site; continued to support fund development goals, focusing on "undesigned" funds that can be allocated to reduce salary gaps; assisted with the evaluation of the settlement and integration program; engaged a communication specialist pro bono to identify gaps and work towards a stronger communication strategy; completed IWSO's Strategic Plan 2021-2025 with the pro bono support of professionals from Deloitte.
- Our strategic priorities for 2020-2025 focus on six areas that are critical to our success and ability to achieve our vision: improve service quality; foster an effective talent strategy; foster an effective governance operating model and strategy; enhance operational efficiency; grow and diversity sources of funding; increase brand engagement and awareness.
- Next steps for the Board 2020-2021: 1) finalize specific aspects of the Strategic Plan (e.g., develop indicators, measures, timelines); and 2) develop a monitoring structure to support implementation; review and finalize communication strategy and develop implementation plan in line with Strategic Plan

6. Approval of 2019/20 Audited Financial Report

- Bota Tuyakova, Treasurer, presented the 2019/20 Audited Financial Statements. Statement of financial position as of March 31, 2020 shows that IWSO is in a very good financial position because current assets are much higher than current liabilities. Cash balance has increased significantly over the last year. Statement of operations shows that revenue and expense are consistent with previous years and IWSO ended the year with a surplus of \$ 41,748
- Bota Tuyakova moved to approve the Audited Financial Report of 2019/20. Patricia Begin seconded the motion. All in favour. **Carried.**

7. Approval of Auditors for 2020/2021

Bota Tuyakova moved to approve KPMG to remain IWSO's auditors for the next fiscal year 2020/21. Laurie Jaeger seconded the motion. All in favour. **Carried.**

8. Presentation: Highlights from the Settlement Program Evaluation

Mercy Lawlivi introduced Sophie Wertheimer, external evaluation consultant. Sophie presented the key insights of the evaluation of IWSO's Settlement and Integration Services. This evaluation aims to understand the impact that the services have on clients and to demonstrate the value and importance of the services to funders and to the community. The evaluation is based on online feedback forms by current and former clients, interviews, online focus group, and online survey. Overall, 78% participants responded that they received excellent services at IWSO and 22% responded that they received good service at IWSO. Clients reported that: "IWSO is a safe and welcoming place" and "The services allow women to gain different skills and positive experiences." From the

feedback, we learned that one issue is the fact that services are not accessible to citizens. More information about services should be shared. Participants would like more computer and English class levels, and combining in-person and online services.

9. Volunteer Appreciation

Noushin Ragheb (Volunteer Coordinator) presented volunteer appreciation. Volunteers had contributed 4,500 hours in the past year. Their contribution was essential to the delivery of many of IWSO's programs and services, such as the yoga, painting, sewing classes, English writing and conversation circle, drop-in computer classes, childcare services, and French conversation classes.

Mechthild Meyer presented volunteer appreciation for board committees: Rachel Truant and Kylie Patrick (for Fund Development Committee), Alma Estable (for Settlement Program Evaluation Committee), and Andrea Greenhous (for Communication Committee).

10. Proposed By-law Changes

Mechthild Meyer proposed By-law change and moved to approve the change in terminology from "minority women" to "racialized women". Barbara Amona seconded the motion. Voting results: 69% in favor, 14% against, and 17% abstain. **Carried.**

Mechthild Meyer moved to change the current Communication ad hoc committee into a "standing committee." Lori-Ann McDonald seconded the motion. Voting results: 92% in favor, 8% abstain. **Carried.**

11. Election of Board Members

Patricia Begin presented Laurie Jaeger who is seeking election for a term of two years. Patricia moved to approve the election of Laurie Jaeger as a board member for a term of two years. Lori-Ann MacDonald seconded the motion. Vote results: 92% in favor, 8% abstain. **Carried.**

Patricia Begin moved to re-elect the nine proposed directors for either a second or third term: Avril Espinosa-Malpica, Bota Tuyakova, Diane Tuyishime, Lori-Ann McDonald, Meriem Bougrassa, Sa Yu, Mechthild Meyer, Sadaf Kachalia, Juliet Woodfield. Navpreet Uppal seconded the motion. 88% in favor, 12% abstain. **Carried.**

12. Presentation of the IWSO Board of Directors 2020-2021

Mechthild Meyer congratulated all the elected IWSO Board of Directors for 2020-2021 and hoped to work with them.

13. Closing Remarks

Mechthild Meyer thanked everyone for their participation and hoped everyone will stay in touch.

14. Adjournment

Sadaf Kachalia thanks everyone for attending and all panelists, board members, volunteers, and the membership. Sadaf moved to adjourn IWSO's AGM 2020. Patricia Begin seconded the motion. All in favor. **Carried.**