

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

As Chair of the Yukon Advisory Council on Women's issues and on behalf of its members, I would like to thank all the women who participated in our ongoing discussions, gave us advice and suggested ways in which we could further the work of the Council. I'd especially like to thank departing member Sarah Taylor for her years of service on behalf of Carmacks and wish her well with her future studies and work.

It has been a pleasure to work with the members of the Council this past year. All the Council members are strong and dedicated women with diverse backgrounds and experience. Each one brings a unique voice and energy to our group.

We wish to thank Marian Horne, who was Minister responsible for the Women's Directorate until the 2011 election, for her unfailing support and guidance. She will continue to be an inspiration and role model for us all. Also, our activities would not be possible without the wonderful staff at the Women's Directorate, who act as the Council Secretariat and we thank all of them for all the work they do on our behalf.

We welcome the Honourable Elaine Taylor as our new Minister and look forward to working with her to bring to the attention of the government, issues of concern to the women of the territory.

The YACWI Strategic Plan was finalized in 2011 and will continue to be our guide in helping Council to identify the issues needing the most urgent and immediate attention. This coming year we will strongly endeavor to strengthen our presence in all the communities and work with as many women of the Yukon as possible to make our voices heard in all levels of government.

BETTY IRWIN
CHAIR



ABOUT THE COUNCIL

The Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues was established by the *Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues Act* in May 1992. The Act directs YACWI to:

- Develop public awareness of the issues affecting the status of women;
- Promote a change of attitudes within the Yukon so that the women may enjoy equality of opportunity;
- Encourage discussions and expressions of opinion by Yukon residents on issues affecting the status of women;
- Review policies, programs and legislation affecting women, as directed by the Minister;
- Advise the Minister with respect to such issues as the Minister may refer to the Council for its consideration;
- Advise the Minister with respect to such issues as the Council considers advisable; and
- Encourage organizations and groups that promote the equality of women.

The Council is comprised of eight members appointed by the Commissioner. At least 50 per cent of the members are from rural areas and at least 25 per cent are members of Yukon First Nations.

Members sit for a three-year, renewable term, at the invitation of the Minister Responsible for the Women's Directorate.

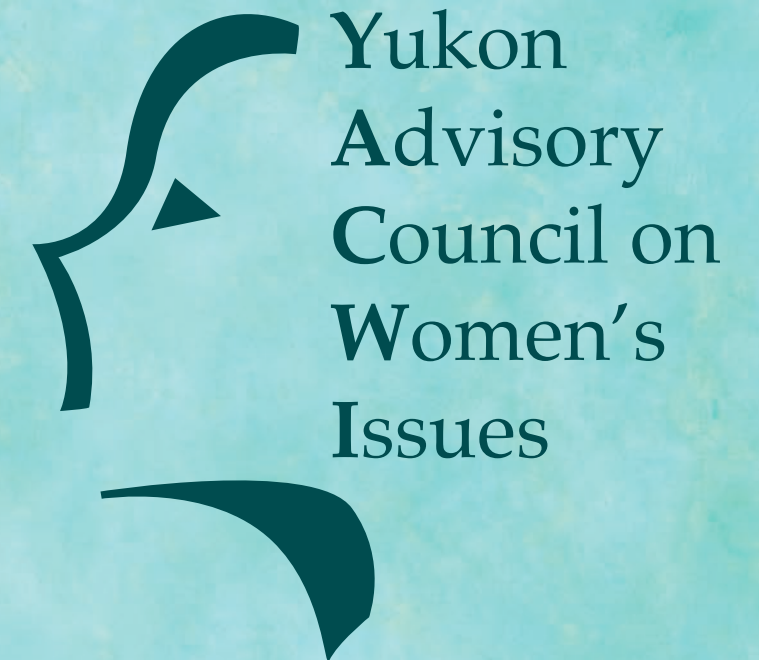
Council business is directed and determined mainly at Council meetings, which are held four times a year.

MEMBERS AS OF MARCH 31, 2012

Chair	Betty Irwin (Whitehorse) betty.irwin@jarwinenterprises.com
Member	Irene Brekke (Whitehorse) brekkedi@northwestel.net
Member	Ann Maje Raider (Watson Lake) majeraider@yahoo.ca
Member	Barb Barchen (Mayo) bbarchen@hotmail.com
Member	Karen Keenan (Teslin) karen.franz@northwestel.net
Member	Melanie Douville (Teslin) chipdouville@gmail.com
Member	Diane Schroeder (Dawson City) shelterdirector@northwestel.net

ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 1, 2011 – MARCH 31, 2012



COUNCIL MEETINGS

YACWI held two meetings during the 2011 fiscal year, one in April and one in December. A meeting planned for the fall had to be cancelled due to the 2011 Territorial election. The Minister Responsible for the Women's Directorate is invited to each meeting and whenever possible, people from other organizations and groups are invited to provide information about current issues.

APRIL 29 & 30, 2011

The Honourable Marian Horne, Minister responsible for the Women's Directorate, was in attendance at this meeting held in Carmacks. Friday evening the Council hosted an open house to which the public was invited to come and speak about issues which they felt were the most important priorities in their community. Some of the issues cited were lack of appropriate housing in the community, the need for a Carmacks safe house for women and children fleeing abuse, bullying in the Tantulus school and Fetal and Alcohol Spectrum Disorder prevention education and support for pregnant women.

DECEMBER 3 & 4, 2011

The Honourable Elaine Taylor, Minister responsible for the Women's Directorate, attended the Friday evening session and received reports from Council members about happenings in the communities. On Saturday, Heather MacFadgen of the Yukon Human Rights Commission (YHRC) delivered information about the Yukon Human Rights Act and how it can and could protect people against discrimination and harassment in several areas of public life, particularly those experiencing violence.

There was also a presentation at the December meeting by Christine Klaassen-St. Pierre from the Yukon Circle of Change on the Next Step to Being the Change workshops and the one-day anti-bullying program offered in some Yukon High Schools called Challenge Day. The Next Step to Being the Change 3-day workshop is a highly experiential and deeply inspiring personal growth workshop designed for adults and youth leaders who may be facilitators during Challenge Days and are interested in growing, changing, and creating relationships based on compassion, respect, and mutual understanding.

Challenge Day's mission is to provide youth and their communities with experiential workshops and programs that demonstrate the possibility of love and connection through the celebration of diversity, truth and full expression. Challenge Day successfully addresses some common issues seen at most schools including cliques, gossip, rumors, negative judgments, teasing, harassment, isolation, stereotypes, intolerance, racism, sexism, bullying, violence, homophobia, hopelessness, apathy, and hidden pressures to create an image, achieve or live up to the expectations of others.

Subsequent to this meeting the council wrote to Minister Taylor to indicate that YACWI supports efforts by the YHRC towards making living free from violence prohibited grounds of discrimination and advocates for its inclusion, by amendment, in the Yukon Human Rights Act. The Council also advocates evidence-based anti-bullying programs being brought into schools and adopted into curriculum.

MAJOR ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNCIL

2012 WOMEN'S FORUM

On February 17th and 18th, approximately 60 women from around the Yukon gathered in Whitehorse for the 2012 Women's Forum "Create the Change You Want to See", as well as the annual women's group meeting. Both events are hosted by YACWI and sponsored by the Women's Directorate, the women's group meeting focussed on training and learning that the groups identified at a previous meeting. The forum showcased a remarkably diverse group of women who have been able to effect change, not only in their lives, but the lives of others as well. The purpose of the Forum was to identify tools and methods that equality seeking individuals and organizations can use to advance the legal, social and economic equality of Yukon women. We were very pleased to have as our Plenary Speaker, Math'ieya Alatini, Chief of the Kluane First Nation. Delegates had the choice to attend three of four planned sessions:

The Bully, the Bullied and the Bystander: How to Be the Change!

Hosted by Christine Klaassen-St. Pierre from the Yukon Circle of Change.

Engaging Community Through Social Media.

Harnessing social media tools is a way to foster change. Sofia Fortin walked participants through Twitter, Facebook, newsletters and blogs among other surprises.

Organizing for Social Change.

Community activists Sue Edelman and June Cable lead an interactive workshop that armed participants with tools to be the change agent in their community.

Women and Alternative Trades.

This workshop was hosted by representatives of alternative trades and organizations supporting women developing businesses.

FEDERAL/PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL WOMEN'S COALITION

In September 2011, the Chair traveled to Halifax to attend a two-day meeting of the Coalition of Provincial and Territorial Advisory Councils on the Status of Women. She noted that we shared the same issues across the country: the aging face of poverty; police investigating police; training for judges and lawyers who are involved in cases of violence and assault and harassment and bullying in schools. The group would like to have the 2013 meeting in Whitehorse.

LEGAL ADVOCATE PROJECT

At the December 2011 meeting of YACWI a motion was passed to support the partial funding of research to clarify the scope and role of a legal women's advocate. The researcher will provide YACWI with potential options relating to women's legal advocacy in the Yukon and based on this research the Council would provide recommendations to the Minister. Of note, Recommendation 4.1 of the *Sharing Common Ground* report calls for the *consideration of a legal advocate position to support women (Appendix A)*. It is intended that this research project will detail the definition of legal advocacy in the context of women's advocacy, the need and potential options for women's legal advocacy in the Yukon. The research will explore what a legal advocate could be, what this role could encompass in the context of existing services and the role of current and proposed women's advocate positions housed within NGOs. The intent of the research is to look at all of the 'advocate' positions and determine what the gaps are in current services. The

MAJOR ACTIVITIES, CON'T

researcher will be required to consult with a wide range of Yukon stakeholders as well as look at similar work done in other provinces and territories.

The research will be partially funded through YACWI (Women's Directorate) and partially funded through The Department of Justice. This project will be informed by the work of the *Sharing Common Ground* Legal Advocacy Subcommittee and the *If My Life Depended On It* report.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2011/2012

YACWI COUNCIL BUDGET 2011/2012

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
Advertising	\$141.12
Travel	\$8,011.22
Travel out-of-territory	\$2,317.10
Honoraria	\$4,125.00
Program Materials	\$677.12
TOTAL	\$15,271.56

YACWI FORUM BUDGET 2011/12

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
Travel	\$11,156.65
Honoraria	\$1,700.00
Contracts	\$17,230.29
Advertising	\$1,249.50
Program Materials	\$751.40
TOTAL	\$32,087.84

HOW TO CONTACT US

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