

**COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES OF OTTAWA/
SERVICES JURIDIQUES COMMUNAUTAIRES D'OTTAWA**

Minutes of the September 11, 2025,
Annual General Meeting

Richelieu-Vanier Community Centre
300 Des Pères-Blancs Avenue
Ottawa, ON K1L 7L5

The AGM began at 5:45 p.m. The business meeting started at 7 p.m.

Present: Clarisse Titus, Adriana Aparicio, Dorothy Murray, Gilbert Vidolo-Ambani, Jenny Gullen, Justin Nesbitt, Michael Oliver, Michele Biss, Zahra Ahmed, Darryl Watson, Paige Watson, Vicky Watson, Aliciadeena Le Roc, Colleen Young, Holden Heppler, Greg Newshaw, Sanjida Arefin, Sarah Concettini, Sonia Al Parsons, Wade Morris, Saathana Karunakaran, Cavell Townley, Dawn Pennington, Michael St. Arnaud, Donna Doucette, Ganna Monastyrskaya, Gary Stein, Ileen Rose Massey, Linda Martineau, Murtaza Sharif, Orion Vasili, Ozcan Ilaslan, Angela Mooney, Blanca Haydee Lopez De Brizuela, Charles Ng, Christelle Azzi, Elena Monterossa, Esther Dionne Desbiens, Isabelle Martel, Kristie Mikhael, Laura MacLean, Lili-Anne Kondo, Melissa Bramson, Nicholas Churchman, Racquel Scott-Tolson, Sarah Sproule, Sylvia Chapman, James Hardwick, Sylvie Okros, Anna Miedema/Guest Speaker for Citizen for public Justice.

Regrets: Jasmine Jin, Alanah Hamam, Hibah Bashir, Aman Sood, Jaime Lefebvre, Jean Paul Banderembako, Joanne Keedi, Morris Rothman, Pedro Segnini, Rawa Oudah, Solange Umwali, Thai Tran, James Baker.

1. Introductions and Land Acknowledgement:

Michele Biss, President of the Board of Directors, welcomed all in attendance to the 2025 Annual General Meeting. She provided a Land Acknowledgement, emphasizing the need for all of us to continue our efforts to right relations with the indigenous peoples of our community.

2. Guest Speaker Presentation:

Anna Miedema of Citizens for Public Justice gave an excellent presentation on Federal Bill C-2: The Strong Borders Act and its potential impact on refugee and migrant rights.

3. Presentations for Departing Board Members:

The following long-standing Board members have finished their terms on the Board of Directors:

Helen Gottfried Unruh and Jenny Gullen

Both were thanked for their contributions and commitment to CLSO over the years.

Presentations to Staff Members for Anniversaries of Service:

The following staff members were thanked and presented with plaques to mark their significant work anniversaries:

Charles Ing – 10 year anniversary

Vicky Watson – 35 year anniversary

7:00: Business Meeting

The business meeting was called to order at 7 pm. The Chair confirmed that the meeting was properly constituted and that no proxies were received.

1. Approval of the Agenda:

Motion: That the agenda be approved as presented.

Moved By: Dorothy Murray

Seconded By: Zahra Ahmed

Motion carried.

2. Approval of Minutes of September 24, 2024 Annual General Meeting:

Motion: That the Minutes of the 2024 AGM be approved as presented.

Moved By: Michael Oliver

Seconded By: Justin Nesbitt

Motion carried.

3. President's Annual Report:

Michele Biss, CLSO President, thanked the CLSO Board members for their effective and collaborative work over the past year. She also thanked Clarisse Titus, CLSO Executive Director, for her role in ensuring that CLSO remains a healthy workplace where staff feel supported and heard and feel that they can work to their full potential.

Michele then summarized some of the highlights of CLSO's work over the past year, including:

- Participation in consultations for the Malatest Report, commissioned by LAO, to endeavour to more accurately measure poverty law needs across the province of Ontario.
- Exploration of new funding and collaboration opportunities such as the initiative with the University of Ottawa Legal Clinic to address the housing needs of vulnerable immigrants, and the Fair Rent Control Initiative
- Addressing the impact of specific legislation on the needs/rights of refugees, including the Safer Municipalities Act and the Strong Borders Act

4. Executive Director's Report

Clarisse Titus, ED of CLSO, highlighted some of the accomplishments of staff over the past year in the areas of casework, public legal education, community development and law reform.

5. Review of March 31, 2025 Audited Financial Statements:

Motion: That the March 31, 2025 Audited Financial Statements be approved as presented.

Moved By: Dorothy Murray

Seconded By: Gilbert Vidolo-Ambani

6. Appointment of Auditor for 2025/2026 Fiscal Year:

Motion: That CLSO reappoint the firm TZR LLP as the Auditor for the 2026/2027 fiscal year.

Moved By: Justin Nesbitt

Seconded By: Michael Oliver

Motion Carried.

7. Election / Acclamation: 2025 - 2026 Board of Director:

There are 3 current Board members who are running for re-election to their second term on the Board:

Michele Biss

Nominated By: Cavell Townley

Seconded By: Gilbert Vidolo-Ambani **CARRIED**

Michael Oliver

Nominated By: Dorothy Murray

Seconded By: Justin Nesbitt **CARRIED**

Dorothy Murray

Nominated By: Michael Oliver

Seconded By: Michele Biss **CARRIED**

For the election of a staff representative to the Board:

Stephanie Morris

Nominated By: Esther Dionne-Desbiens

Seconded By: Lili-Anne Kondo **CARRIED**

8. Adjournment:

Moved By: Michael Oliver **CARRIED**