

**MINUTES**  
**SGC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 2024**

Mennonite Central Committee  
600 45<sup>th</sup> St. West, Saskatoon

**PRESENT:**

Andrea MacLeod, President  
Andreas Denz, Vice President  
Victoria Oppenlander, Treasurer (via Zoom from Regina)  
Kendra Koerting, Director  
Bruno Koßmann, Director  
Gerald Freyer, Director  
Verena Gramiak, Director  
Theresa Kliem, Director  
Stephanie Schaefer, Director

**EXCUSED:**

Ilona Beck, Secretary

**STAFF:**

Gabriele Waidelich-Harrison, Executive Director  
Josephin Dick, Office & Program Assistant  
Nan Li, Summer Student

Ronald Haskell, Melville & District German Heritage Club  
Janet Jost, Austrian Canadian Edelweiss Club of Regina  
Inken Kessel, Das Schulhaus – Regina German Language School  
Kathleen Schroeder-Brass, German Language School Saskatoon  
Katharina Ulbrich, Saskatchewan Association of Teachers of German (SATG)  
Reg Reiter, Saskatoon German Heritage Society  
Loretta Reiter, Saskatoon German Heritage Society  
Darlene Rubrecht, KG Harmonie  
Eckhard Rubrecht, KG Harmonie  
Alvin Knoll, American Historical Society of Germans From Russia  
Berbel Knoll, Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Diane Neufeld, German Canadian Club Concordia  
Shelley Hungness, SKAT Club Saskatoon  
Maria Hartman, Volksliederchor Harmonie  
Franziska Davies-Perret, Kochloeffel & Nudelholz  
Ethan Booker, Concordia Alpenrose Schuhplattler Verein  
Brenda Booker, Concordia Junior Alpenrose Dancers  
Greg Booker, Concordia Junior Alpenrose Dancers

Vicky Maurus, KulturGarten  
Rosa Gebhardt, KulturGarten  
Mackenzie Revet, Concordia Alpenrose Schuhplattler Verein

Deb Hubenig, Austrian Canadian Edelweiss Club of Regina  
Merv Weiss, Saskatoon German Heritage Society  
Benedict Nussbaum, Individual Member, Honorary Consul

**GUESTS:**

Daniela Martens, Nominated for Treasurer  
Ida Betsch  
Sharon Koßmann

**1. Call to Order**

President Andrea MacLeod called the meeting to order at 10:09 a.m. and made a land acknowledgement. A special welcome to our Honorary Consul Benedict Nussbaum.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

Andrea asked if delegates accept the agenda as presented.

**MOTION:** To approve the agenda as presented.  
Darlene Rubrecht / Ronald Haskell  
**CARRIED**

**3. Approval of Minutes of 2023 Annual General Meeting Minutes**

Andrea asked for approval of the 2023 Annual General Meeting Minutes.

**MOTION:** To approve the minutes as printed in the 2023/2024 Annual Report.  
Katharina Ulbrich / Franziska Davies-Perret  
**CARRIED**

**4. Business Arising**

No business arising.

**5. President's Report**

Andrea mentioned a few items from her president's report. The full report can be found in the 2023/2024 Annual Report. She also recognized the support that SGC has received from Sask Lotteries in partnership with SaskCulture.

Andrea excused Thomas Kolbach, our second Office & Program Assistant, and mentioned him being an excellent addition to our staff.

SGC's new Strategic Plan started in April, and it will be the guideline for the next three years. SGC's programs are successful, and we are reaching many people in Saskatchewan.

Last fall, SGC applied for Annual Global Funding (AGF), and we will receive funding from Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund of Sport, Culture and Recreation for the next three years.

Andrea asked the attending if they had questions regarding the written report. No questions were asked.

Andrea thanked the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture, and Recreation, as well as SaskCulture, for their ongoing support. Through their Annual Global Funding SGC has been able to sustain its operations and provide funding to associated groups rooted in community involvement.

**MOTION:** To approve the President's Report as printed in the Annual Report and the highlights verbally delivered.  
Stephanie Schaefer / Greg Booker  
**CARRIED**

## **6. Treasurer's Report**

Victoria Oppenlander, SGC's Treasurer joined the meeting via Zoom from Regina.

Statement of Operation:

I will begin my report by going through the statement of operations. 2023/2024 was a year where operations reflected the new "normal" after several years of COVID and saw an increase in costs due to inflation. The SGC experienced some financial pressure due to the increased costs, while still receiving the same funding for the last year of the funding period of the Annual Global Funding from Saskatchewan Lotteries. As I will discuss further in my report, Gabi and the SGC staff did an exceptional job balancing these cost increases while ensuring that member groups received funding for their events, and implementing the wonderful programs, such as the Advent Calendar and Culture in the Kitchen, that the SGC puts on throughout the year!

Revenue

The SGC is grateful that the majority of our funding is from the Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation. The Annual Global Funding (AGF) distributed through SaskCulture was in its 4th year and final year of the funding period. Gabi worked diligently on the new AGF application that was submitted in the fall.

Our overall revenue remained fairly consistent within the prior year. Last year, SGC received a one-time \$10,000 Special Initiatives Fund from SaskCulture to assist us with Covid recovery efforts and the need for additional supports, which was not received this year. However, we did receive a Summer Student Grant for the summer student that was hired last year, which we were not able to do in the 2023 fiscal year due to timing of hiring a summer student, as well as the Saskatchewan job grant.

Just for your background, in 2023 the Summer Student Grant came through so late that there wasn't much work left for the student to do. As SGC was not allowed to shorten the hiring time either, we declined the grant. Instead, SGC hired a summer student for a small number of hours only and paid it ourselves. The amount set aside in the budget was basically the amount SGC would have had to add to the summer student grant anyway. With this solution, no additional funds had to be spent.

As per schedule 1, our self-earned revenue decreased due to a decrease in registration fees for Treffpunkt Weekend, merchandise and Culture in the Kitchen (smaller kitchen = fewer participants). This was offset by an increase in translations. Through higher self-earned revenue, the SGC can invest funds into the restricted fund (contingency fund) as it can only be built up with money outside the Trust Fund of Sports, Culture and Recreation.

#### Expenses

On the expense side, office operations decreased by \$1,700, mostly due to printing fewer Annual Report, fewer letterhead paper and sending fewer letters via post, rather sending more letters via email (schedule 2). Organization Business Cost (schedule 3) decreased by \$1,200 due to a decrease in "audit fees" and "other" (mostly due to an overall decreased cost for subscription-based services, as the Kaspersky subscription paid for last year is only paid every 2-3 years). The audit fees decreased as the new auditor's fees are lower than the previous auditors.

Schedule 4 "Travel and Meetings" increased \$1,200 due to travel for in person board meetings, as well as additional costs due to several directors having to travel from outside Regina and Saskatoon to attend meetings.

AGM costs decreased due to the change in the AGM format and having Treffpunkt on one day as opposed to two days as done in the past.

Personnel cost increased due to raises for the office staff, as well as a transition period with two Office & Program, Assistants to allow Franziska to transfer her knowledge and expertise prior to her departure.

The Postillion publication cost increased due to printing more editions which increased printing and shipping cost.

Schedule 5 "Member Funding": the decrease of \$4,600 is mainly due to a reduction in school funding (fewer students and fewer schools applying) and by not paying out the Treffpunkt grant to a member group as SGC was hosting Treffpunkt.

Schedule 6 "SGC Programs & Projects" decreased by \$5,000 mainly due to the strategic plan that was completed last year. This plan is done every three years and serves as SGCs road map for the next three years of operations.

Schedule 7 "Sponsorship" decreased due to receiving fewer sponsorship applications for German-themed community engagement compared to the year before. The SGC also exercised caution in paying out larger amounts as we knew our budget would be tight.

Overall, the SGC finished strong with a net income of \$6,656, an increase of \$4,000 from last year.

"Statement of Changes in Net Assets", you can see that SGC was able to invest \$2,500 into the Restricted Fund = contingency fund which is described in the "Notes", point 2 "Fund Accounting". This contingency fund can provide for long-term sustainability in the event of an emergency such as significant change in funding or to settle any debts in the event of a dissolution.

Policy: The contingency fund should consist of a maximum of 25% of the annual operating budget and can only be built up with money outside the Trust Fund of Sports, Culture and Recreation

I would like to thank Saskatchewan Lotteries Trust Fund for Sport, Culture and Recreation for their continued support to our organization and to MWC Chartered Professional Accountants for their work in auditing our financial statements.

Shelley Hungness asked how much SaskCulture will give the SGC for how many years.

Gabi answered that we will receive \$ 200,000 for the next 3 years. Only 30% of the applicants received an increase, 70% of the applicants stayed status quo or received a decrease. Therefore, SGC did well with the application, by having a down correction of only \$2,000.

No other questions were asked.

Victoria thanked SaskCulture and SaskLotteries for their continuous support.

**MOTION:** To approve the Treasurer's Report and the 2023/2024 Audited Financial Statements as presented.

Victoria Oppenlander / Reg Reiter

**CARRIED**

## **7. Appointment of Auditor for 2024/2025**

This was the second year that MWC Chartered Professional Accountants audited the financial statements and completed their work in a timely and professional manner. I would like to share that the auditors commended the SGC staff on the cleanliness of the books and records that they received for the audit, as well as the prompt responses to their questions that they received from Gabi and her team. The board recommends using them again for the 2024/2025 audit.

**MOTION:** To appoint MWC Chartered Professional Accountants for the 2024/2025 SGC audit.

Victoria Oppenlander / Bruno Koßmann

**CARRIED**

For those who aren't aware, after being the treasurer for six years, I have decided to not renew for another term. I would like to personally thank Gabi, Franzi, Josephin and Thomas for making my job of reviewing the monthly financial statements and providing updates to the board at the audit and finance meetings and board meetings really easy. I am personally not surprised at the auditors' comments about the clean books and records because I could see that every month through the diligence and hard work the office put into preparing the monthly financial statements. I would also like to thank the present and past boards for the years of insightful and thought-provoking conversations we had around the board table. Thank you for having me as your treasurer for the last six years.

Andrea thanked Victoria for her services as treasurer since 2018.

## **8. Elections**

Andreas Denz was heading the election and started with introduction of the current board members. Two positions in the Executive, President and Treasurer, and four director positions were up for election. Except for the Treasurer all previous members of the board agreed to serve for another term.

Each person up for election introduced themselves.

### Election of President

Andreas explained that no one else was running for the position, besides Andrea MacLeod. Andrea MacLeod was declared President of the SGC by acclamation (2-year position).

Election of Treasurer

Andreas explained that no one else was running for the position, besides Daniela Martens. She was declared Treasurer of the SGC by acclamation (2-year position).

Election of Directors

There are four director positions to be filled on SGC's board.

Four candidates on the slate to be elected: Gerald Freyer, Verena Gramiak, Thereasa Kliem, and Bruno Koßmann

Each candidate was elected by acclamation for 2-year positions.

Andreas introduced the new SGC Board of Directors to the membership and congratulated them.

New Board of Directors

President: Andrea MacLeod

Vice President: Andreas Denz

Secretary: Ilona Beck

Treasurer: Daniela Martens

Director: Gerald Freyer

Director: Stephanie Schaefer

Director: Kendra Koerting

Director: Verena Gramiak

Director: Theresa Kliem

Director: Bruno Koßmann

**9. Other Matters**

Member reports, written reports can be found in the Annual Report

Andrea asked the delegates of the present member group, if they wanted to add anything about their groups which was not mentioned in the Annual Report.

Theresa Kliem, CFR 90.5 FM Saskatoon Community Radio

Theresa mentioned that one of the founding members of the Klangfabrik, Sigrid Kirmse passed earlier this year. She is grateful to her for all the contributions Sigrid provided for the German community, the radio, and all the cultural groups she was involved with. It is important to keep the radio program running. Theresa asked all attending to keep looking for interested individuals who might want to join the radio program. They can contact Theresa or Verena.

Inken Kessel, Das Schulhaus

Das Schulhaus is looking for new teachers, especially individuals who might want to teach preschool children, since these classes always need two teachers in attendance.

Janet Jost, Austrian Canadian Edelweiss Club of Regina

The club celebrated their 50-year anniversary. It was lots of work, but also very interesting to meet all the individuals who were working with and for the club over these years. The club participated at Mosaic, and it was great to share Austrian culture with many visitors.

Katharina Ulbrich, Saskatchewan Association of Teachers of German

The SATG didn't hold a Language Competition this year. A new Instagram account was introduced, and classes and students were encouraged to submit videos or pictures on Instagram. The best submissions could win monetary prizes for their classes. One prize went to Luther Collegiate and another to the German Language School Saskatoon.

Shelley Hungness, German Canadian Club Concordia

Shelley thanked the SGC for their support. The club plans to take part at Folkfest and has secured Nutana Legion as the venue again. Every group or individual who wants to take part should reach out to the club. Volunteers are needed to have a successful event.

Shelley Hungness, SKAT Club Saskatoon

Eckhard asked if the SKAT Club could provide some lessons in Regina. Shelley replied that it might be possible if enough participants can be found.

Reg Reiter, Saskatoon German Heritage Society

The group had a table at the Heritage Festival in Saskatoon, and it was well visited. They collect books and information about the history of immigrants mostly from the Black Sea area to Saskatchewan. It is interesting to learn about the different routes immigrants came. The group organized public lecture talks in Saskatoon at Alice Turner Library.

Alvin Knoll, Volksliederchor Harmonie

The choir is going strong. They had many performances and even more invitations, than they can accommodate. The cost for performances is often an issue, since they can't afford to go to more events, even if they receive an honorarium. Next year the choir will celebrate their 70-year anniversary.

Alvin Knoll, American Historical Society of Germans from Russia

Their lecture talk from Merv had about 70 people in attendance. Dr. Miller from the Fargo University is coming for a lecture talk in October. As usual the cost for events is limited to what can be planned. But the group is trying, nevertheless.

Bruno Koßmann, German Canadian Society Harmonie

The club needed a new AC unit. Regrettably, the unit was destroyed by vandals before it was installed on the roof of the building. Regina Plumbing donated a new unit. Many thanks to them. The cost for the installation had to be covered by the club. With large events, like the Solstice Celebrations at the end of June, it is great to have a working AC unit for the building available.

Theresa Kliem organized a 50/50 Raffel for this year's AGM-Treffpunkt and asked to see her after the AGM to purchase tickets.

Andrea asked if any group wanted to share some more information. She thanked all groups for their reports and mentioned the many ways that SGC provides outreach and support for all groups in Saskatchewan, as well as programs, services and projects. There are many resources which can be offered for events. SGC offers consultations, poster designs, and cultural presentations.

Andrea reminded the delegates to fill out their travel expense forms.

In 2024 SGC is celebrating its 40-year anniversary. Old Postillions will be scanned and added to our resource page, so everyone can read these newsletters.

She stated for members what SGC requires from them, such as follow-up reports and funder acknowledgements. She asked all groups to inform the SGC of upcoming events, so they can be promoted on our website and social media sites. SGC needs to be informed, so we can pass on our knowledge and cross-promote events.

The board has agreed to reduce Postillion editions to three per year, since the timeline between editions was sometimes too short, and the cost of printing and shipping is too high. In the future there will be a Spring, Summer and Winter edition.

Andrea thanked SaskCulture and SaskLotteries for their continued support; mention of the renewed lottery agreement and benefits and impact of SaskLotteries funding.

**10. Adjournment**

**MOTION:** To adjourn the meeting.  
Andrea MacLeod / Janet Jost

The meeting was adjourned at 11:18 a.m.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Submitted by Josephin Dick

\_\_\_\_\_  
Andrea MacLeod, President