Minutes of the PIRS 2025 Annual General Meeting (AGM)
January 19, 2026, 6:00-8:00 PM
Location: Creekside Community Recreation Center, 1 Athletes Way, Vancouver, BC V5Y 0B1
Multipurpose Room # 4

Minutes

6:12 pm — Attendance and Quorum
Mariam Bouchoutrouch: Welcome and Housekeeping. Thank you to all of PIRS partners, funders, special guests and board chairs.

6:13 pm — Sonam Swarup and Ella Laure Hipolito called the meeting to Order
68 attendees including 20 society members, honored guests, PIRS staff, and Board members.

6:13 pm — Sladjana Borovcanin delivered the Land Acknowledgement.

6:14 pm — Motion to approve the AGM 2025 Agenda, Moved Jessica Forman, seconded Yannick Hilaricus and carried. 9 members in favor, none opposed.

Motion to approve the Minutes of the Nov 14, 2023 AGM, Moved Yannick Hilaricus, seconded Heather Kennedy, and carried 10 members in favor, none opposed

6:16 pm — Board Chair's Report
Chair Fatima Ahmed presented her report, reflecting on PIRS' continued commitment to supporting immigrant and refugee women. She shared that the past year has reinforced the importance of hope, solidarity, and collective care. Fatima acknowledged the dedication of staff, volunteers, and leadership, emphasizing that PIRS' work is grounded in partnership rather than charity. She highlighted the organization's belief in community-led knowledge, strength, and leadership, and reaffirmed that PIRS stands in solidarity with those seeking support and those willing to offer it. She concluded by noting that as the organization moves into the next 50 years, it does so with clarity, shared purpose, and confidence in its future.

6:22 pm — Executive Director's Report
Executive Director, Mariam Bouchoutrouch presented her report, reflecting on PIRS' long-standing commitment to supporting immigrant and refugee women and their families. She acknowledged the founders and community members whose work over the past five decades laid the foundation for the organization.
Mariam shared that while PIRS' programs have evolved, its purpose remains the same; when women are supported, communities thrive. She highlighted PIRS' impact, serving over 900 women and 200 children from more than 55 countries through programs such as Community English Classes, the Safe Haven Program, IWAC, the Building a Childcare System initiative, and the Pathways program, the pathways program supported 130 women to complete training and certification.

The organization's social enterprise work, including pop-up childcare, delivered over 200 childminding sessions in partnership with more than 20 organizations. Mariam thanked the staff, Board of Directors, volunteers, and community partners for their continued support, recognizing over 2,000 volunteer hours contributed. She also acknowledged PIRS' receipt of AMSSA 2025 Riasat Ali Khan Diversity Award and concluded by reaffirming PIRS' commitment, as it marks its 50th year, to advancing a future where immigrant women are recognized as leaders and changemakers. Mariam encouraged community members to support PIRS' work practically through the "50 for 50" initiative, encouraging a monthly contribution of $50.

6:33 pm — Treasurer's Report
Treasurer, Sonam Swarup presented the audited financial statement for the fiscal year (July 2024- Aug 2025). Full auditor reports and financial statements are available upon request.

Sonam Swarup noted an increase in total assets due to grants and revenue received that remain unspent at year end. Liabilities also increased as a result of grants received but not yet spent.

Several questions were raised by members. A question was asked regarding how the surplus would be carried forward into the new fiscal year. It was noted that, given significant changes in the funding landscape, there is a continued focus on strengthening and diversifying revenue streams. Members also asked which programs are more costly or difficult to fund, to which it was shared that Community English Classes are not funded by the federal government. Clarification was requested on the meaning of community relations, and a question was raised regarding differences in in-kind donations. It was explained that PIRS received a high volume of donations during and immediately following COVID-19, and that access to free spaces has since decreased.

Motion to approve the 2024- 2025 Audited Financial Report was moved (Kathy Price), seconded (Maryann Bird), and carried.10 members in favor, none opposed.

Motion to re-appoint Tompkins Wozny Professional Accountants as
Auditors for the next fiscal year 2025-2026 was moved (Sally Rudolf) seconded (Gyda Chud) and carried. 9 members in favor, none opposed

6:48 pm Board of Directors Election 2025 – 2026

Ella Hipolito introduced and thanked the Nominations Committee members (Fatima Ahmed, Renu Sera and Mariam Bouchoutrouch). The nomination process was explained and the slate for recommended Board of Directors was presented follows:

The following Board members are returning for the second year of their two-year term:

- Jessica Forman
- Renu Seru
- Sladjana Borovcanin
- Yannick Hilaricus

The following are board members, presented for election to another two-year term:

- Elle Laure Hipolito
- Fatima K. Ahmed
- Sonam Swarup

The following are presented as candidates for the Board of Directors, to be elected for two-year term:

- Michael Mutiso
- Nene Azu
- Phyllis Lai

Motion to approve the incoming slate was moved (Heather Kennedy), seconded (Gyda Chud) and carried. 11 members in favor, None opposed**.**

The following are the board members who will be stepping down:

- Prerna Thaker
- Shams Alibhai

6:50 pm Sladjana Borovcanin to present a special resolution on bylaws. Language edits were made to improve clarity without altering the intent of the bylaws. Sladjana reviewed the specific changes that had been proposed. Motion to approve the incoming slate

was moved (Caithlin Scarpelli) seconded (Sally Rudolf), and carried. 13 members in favor, None opposed.

6:57 pm PIRS Educational Bursary

Sladjana and Bridget introduced the bursaries (George Sisters and Amy Dalgleish) and the Together We Thrive Award. The following recipients were congratulated: Asma Insaf, Baljeet Kaur, Kai (Cathy) Chen, Jihyeong Yoo, Mobina Soltari, Nargis Jelali.Zohra Hashimi, Noella Ndayikeza, Sefiqa Akbari & JSW ,who collectively received a total of $5,900 in bursaries for the PIRS Educational Bursary.

The Together We Thrive Award, totaling $5,000, was awarded to Fahima Mohibi. Fahima aspires to become a police officer and has volunteered with several organizations, including South Vancouver Neighborhood House

7:01 pm Rosalva Treviño and Jessica Forman presented the Mary Affleck Award to this year's recipient, Heather Kennedy. The award was established in the year of Mary Affleck's passing through a donation from her family, ensuring that her spirit and dedication continue to be celebrated.

7:04 pm Final Announcements

Sonam thanked all in attendance for their dedication and contributions to the organization. She concluded by reminding everyone to contribute to the "50 for 50" initiative to support the work that PIRS continues to do.

7:06 pm Adjourn Business Portion of the Meeting The motion to Adjourn the Business Portion of the Meeting was moved (Patsy George), seconded (Sally Rudolf), and carried. 9 members in favor, none opposed.

7:10 pm Mariam introduced Dr Siobhan Wittig McPhee to lead the Immersive Storytelling and Reflection Session

7:21 pm Mariam introduced the panel; Heather Kennedy- moderator. Panelists: Bassema El Alie, Fernanda Hurtado, Marialejandra Reyes and Patsy George.

7:52 pm Mariam said thank you to the panelists and presented a thank you gift to them.

7:53 pm Mariam led a toast to PIRS

7:54pm Thank you and goodbyes

Attendees stayed behind to enjoy refreshments, mix and mingle