



Toastmasters International District 21 – 96 Joint Business Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 27, 2025

Online via ZOOM

Date: May 27, 2025

Time: 6:42 to 8:12 PM Pacific Time

1. CALL TO ORDER

Presiding Officer Gary Schmidt, DTM, Past International President called the meeting to order. He welcomed the members and guests to the joint District 96 and 21 Business Meeting.

Zoom Meeting Protocol

Zoom Master James Falcon, ACB, CL explained the Name and Zoom Meeting protocol.

Name Protocol

- Attendees should rename themselves in Zoom, using the following format if you they are meeting officials or have speaking roles during the meeting:
 - @District Position, Name
 - @District Director, Jim Heeren
 - @Timer, Phyllis Nielsen
 - @Candidate, Louisa Davis
 - @Credentials, Darryl Farquhar
- All Others: No need to rename themselves.

Speaking Protocol

- Attendees' audio will be muted unless recognized by the chair to speak. A Zoom host will activate speakers' audio.
- For Technical support, attendees should chat with Zoom master James Falcon.
- The chat feature is only available to attendees if they are communicating with a host, cohost or those noted in the chat.
- Attendees should use the Raise Hand function to be recognized.
- Comments during debate will be limited to 2 minutes.
- Before speaking, attendees should state their name & position. Any guest wishing to speak must ask the Chair for permission.

Disclaimer Notice

Gary Schmidt read out the disclaimer notice: "This meeting is being recorded. Please read along with this important Notice from Toastmasters. By attending this District Council meeting, you agree to the privacy policy of Toastmasters International as well as the unassociated remote hosting service. Some of your personal information, such as name, image, and any shared messages may be shared with other meeting participants and will be recorded by Toastmasters International who may use the recording in the future as it sees fit. Your remote attendance hereby discharges Toastmasters International from all claims, demands, rights, promises, damages and liabilities arising out of or in connection with the use or distribution of said video recordings, including but not limited to any claims for invasion of privacy, appropriation of likeness or defamation."

District Mission

Gary Schmidt read out the District Mission: “We build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence.”

Land Acknowledgment:

Gary Schmidt read out the land acknowledgement: “Our Toastmaster clubs meet on the ancestral, traditional and unceded territory of the Coastal Salish people, specifically the Lummi, Semiahmoo, Squamish, Musqueam and Tsleil-Waututh Nations. It is our privilege to live, work, play, create and speak on these lands.”

Welcome Dignitaries

Gary Schmidt acknowledged the following dignitaries.

<u>Past International Directors (PIDs):</u> Louisa Davis, DTM, PID Mary Morrison, DTM, PID Tom Jones, DTM, PID Rick Sydor, DTM, PID <u>Region Advisors (RAs):</u> Karen Burgess, DTM, 2025-2026 RA & D21 PDD Jim Heeren, DTM, PRA	<u>Past District Directors:</u> Lydia Burchell, DTM, PDD Kerry Deschamps, DTM, PDD Carole Murphy, DTM, PDD Phyllis Nielsen, DTM, PDD Paul Rostagno, DTM, IPDD Kyle Hall, DTM, PDD	<u>District 21 Trio:</u> Virginia Keast, DTM, DD Carlos Millones, PQD Karen Hall, DTM, CGD <u>District 96 Trio:</u> Jim Heeren, DTM, DD Sherry Ernst, DTM, PQD Louisa Davis, DTM, CGD
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Appointment of Administration Manager.

Gary Schmidt appointed Lise Minovitz, DTM to take the minutes of this session.

Voting Procedures

Raymond Ho, DTM, explained the voting process using Election Buddy. Only those with registered votes will get an email with access to a ballot. A practice test vote was conducted.

2. CREDENTIALS REPORT

Credentials Committee Chair Darryl Farquhar, ATMG, ALB gave the Credentials Report. He announced that quorum requirements have been met. Results of the Credentials Report are below.

<i>Clubs in Good Standing / Eligible to Vote</i>	<i>181</i>
<i>Eligible Votes (2 votes per club, PRES and VPE)</i>	<i>362</i>
<i>Quorum (⅓)</i>	<i>121</i>
<i>Total Registered Clubs</i>	<i>149</i>
<i>Quorum Status</i>	QUORUM ACHIEVED
<i>Total Registered District Executive Votes</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>Total Registered Votes</i>	<i>184</i>

Darryl moved that the results be adopted as read. Motion carried. Report accepted as presented.

Housekeeping

Gary Schmidt explained the following appointments.

- Zoom Hosts: James Falcon, DTM, Sherrie Ernst, DTM, D96 PQD and Kyle Hall, DTM, D21 PDD are Zoom hosts. They will control the Zoom meeting and monitor the chat feature to help the presiding officer.
- Election Monitor/Chief Teller: Raymond Ho will control sending out the voting ballots for each election and monitor the results.
- Timer: Phyllis Nielsen, DTM, D21 PDD will serve as Timer. She will explain time limits and lights when necessary.

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was circulated prior to the meeting. Gary Schmidt asked if there were any changes or questions. As there were no objections, the agenda was adopted.

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| 1. Call to Order | 5. Elections |
| 2. Credentials Report | 6. Transition Committee Report |
| 3. Adoption of the Agenda | 7. Announcements |
| 4. Alignment Report | 8. Adjournment |

4. ALIGNMENT REPORT

Alignment Committee Co-Chair Sharookh Daroowala, DTM presented the previously posted new District 21 Alignment Report. The Alignment Committee was co-chaired with Karen Burgess, DTM, PDD, RA. He noted that 10 years ago District 21 was split into Districts 96 and 21, and they will be reunified as District 21 on July 1.

- **Alignment Committee:** The Alignment Committee members were acknowledged for their assistance in developing the alignment for 2025-2026.

<u>District 21:</u> Division A: Steven Leung, DTM Division B: Valerie Gunn, DTM Division C: Charnel Izaks Division F: Susan Gage Division E: Clinton Lee, DTM	<u>District 96:</u> Division A: Kim Dickie Division B: Harold Liu Division C: Reza Sahraei Division F: Melody Helleout Division E: Ahmed Hussain
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- **Realignment Criteria:** Efforts were made to evenly distribute stronger and weaker clubs and accommodate potential growth. The plan takes into account geography, club strength, meeting formats (in-person, hybrid, online), meetings days/times. Club type (community, corporate or advanced) and recent club losses or additions. Each area should have 4-6 (minimum 3) clubs.
- **New Divisions:** There will be 9 divisions of 4-5 areas each in the realignment: Division A (Victoria & South Vancouver Island), Division B (Vancouver Island), Division C (Sea to Sky, Sunshine Coast, North Shore & Vancouver), Division D (Vancouver), Division E (Vancouver, Coquitlam, Port Moody), Division F (Burnaby), Division G (Delta, Richmond, Surrey), Division H (Surrey and the Fraser Valley) and Division J (Northern, Kootenays, Okanagan).
- **Size of Divisions:** Most divisions will have 23-29 clubs. The divisions will have between 262 and 457 members.

On behalf of the Alignment Committee, Sharookh Daroowala moved that the D21 Alignment report for 2025-2026 be adopted as presented.

Gary Schmidt asked if there were any questions, suggestions or objections.

Informal Considerations

- Louisa Davis said that City of the Arts has been renamed Presentation Artists. Since it is a hybrid club between Powell River and Port Moody that is focused on meeting in person in Powell River, she thinks it does not fit that well into D53, which is in Burnaby. She suggested that it be moved to the Sunshine Coast (C23) due to geographic proximity. There were no objections to the proposed change.
- Paul Rostagno asked with the letter "I" was skipped as a division letter. Karen Burgess said the letter "I" was skipped as it is difficult to identify as a division letter.

With no objections, the Realignment Report was approved with the change proposed by Louisa Davis. The results of the Realignment Report will be submitted to TI WHQ by July 15, 2025.

5. ELECTIONS

On behalf of District Leadership Committee Chair Carole Murphy, DTM, D96 PDD, District Leadership Committee Member Lydia Burchell, DTM, PDD presented the new D21 Leadership Committee Report. The District Leadership Committee consisted of the following members.

DLC Chair: Carole Murphy, DTM, PDD

District 21

Division A: Steven Leung, DTM

Division C: Jan Ireland, DTM

Division E: Tom Jones, DTM, PID

Division F: Carol Carter, DTM

Division J: Colt Cash

District 96:

Division A: Kim Dickie

Division B: Darren Frew, DTM

Division C: Kerry Deschamps, DTM

Division D: Lydia Burchell, DTM

Division E: Stefano Cossalter, DTM

The District 21 and 96 Leadership Committee put forward the following slate of District Officers for the newly aligned District 21 for the Toastmaster year 2025-2026.

District Director: Louisa Davis, DTM

Program Quality Director: Christopher Chen, DTM & Melody Helleouet, Level 5

Club Growth Director: Mark Hurrell, DTM (submitted as Floor Candidate)

Division Directors:

- Division A: *Vacant*
- Division B: Frank Tanguay
- Division C: *Vacant*
- Division D: *Vacant*
- Division E: *Vacant*
- Division F: *Vacant*
- Division G: Susan Gage
- Division H: Hardip Viridi
- Division J: *Vacant*

Division Director Floor Candidates

After the District Leadership Committee Report was submitted to the District Directors, the following two Toastmasters submitted their applications as Floor Candidates for open Division Director positions. They meet the candidate qualifications defined in Article VII, Section (d), of the District Administrative Bylaws.

- Division C: Tom Leson, IP Level 4
- Division D: Clinton Kam, DTM

The District Leadership Committee Chair was not notified of any additional candidates wishing to be considered.

For offices with only ONE candidate, the Presiding Officer dispensed with the secret ballot and instructed the Administration Manager to cast a single ballot for the candidate. This procedure was followed for the offices of District Director, Club Growth Director, and Division Governors (Divisions B, C, D, G and F).

For offices with MORE THAN ONE candidate, each nominee will have two minutes to speak. The candidates spoke, and elections were held for that position. The results were:

Christopher Chen, DTM: 42 votes

Melody Helleouet, IP5: 98 votes

Melody Helleouet was declared elected District 21 Program Quality Director for 2025-2026.

The Presiding Officer extended congratulations to all Elected District 21 District Officers for 2025-2026.

2025-2026 District Officers

District Director: Louisa Davis, DTM

Program Quality Director: Melody Helleouet, IP5

Club Growth Director: Mark Hurrell, DTM

Division Directors

- Division A: *Vacant*
- Division B: Frank Tanguay
- Division C: Tom Leson
- Division D: Clinton Kam
- Division E: *Vacant*
- Division F: *Vacant*
- Division G: Susan Gage
- Division H: Hardip Viridi
- Division J: *Vacant*

He noted that all decisions are final.

District Director Elect Comments

Louisa Davis said she was thrilled to be next year's District Director. She is excited to show how the best of Districts 96 and 21, comprising all the clubs in British Columbia and the Yukon, come together to build something even better. She asked participants to imagine all members in a thriving club, with enough members to make meetings fun and engaging, with all officer roles filled, and finding their voice to make the world a better place. She thanked everyone for electing her and said now the hard work begins. She will be calling members about leadership roles.

6. TRANSITION COMMITTEE REPORT

Transition Committee Co-Chairs Immediate Past District 96 Director Paul Rostagno, DTM gave the following update on the transition of Districts 21 and 96 to one unified district, District 21. His Co-Chair was Past District 21 Director Phyllis Nielsen.

- **Districts 21 & 96 Merge:** The merging of districts is a mandate from TI Board of Directors due to their assessment that there are too many districts and too many small districts; districts must have at least 130 clubs. He displayed a visual showing how Mary Morrison, DTM, PID has been spearheading the Region 1 Realignment, which covers districts in BC, the Yukon, Alaska, and Washington state. The outcome is that Region 1 will be divided into two districts: one in Canada and one in the US. The transition was divided into three buckets: the District Leadership Committee (chaired by PDD 96 Carole Murphy, DTM), the District Realignment Committee (chaired by Karen Burgess, PDD 21, RA), and the District Transition Committee (co-chaired by Paul Rostagno and PDD 21 Phyllis Nielsen, DTM). There will be a Joint D21 and D96 Business Meeting on May 27 facilitated by Gary Schmidt, PIP.
- **Committee Members:** The following committee members were thanked for their assistance with the transition.

Mary Morrison, DTM PID
Phyllis Nielsen, DTM, D21 PDD, Co-Chair
Paul Rostagno, DTM, D96 IPDD, Co-Chair
Virginia Keast, DTM, D21 DD
Jim Heeren, DTM, D96 DD
Carlos Millones, DTM, D21 PQD
Sherry Ernst, DTM, D96 PQD
Karen Hall, DTM, D21 CGD
Louisa Davis, DTM, D96 CGD

Natalie Findlay, D96 PR Manager
Hanna Thobani, D21 Co-PR Manager
Mark Hurrell, DTM, D21 Co-PR Manager
Sophie Zhang, D21 Finance Manager
Lise Minovitz, DTM, D96 Admin Manager
Ahmed Hussein, D96 Logistics Manager
David Nguyen, D96 Finance Manager

- **Purpose:** The purpose of the Transition Committee is to review existing best practices of Districts 21 and 96 and to formulate recommendations to the trio, for the successful integration of these districts for the 2025-2026 Toastmasters year.
- **Timeline Constraints:** Paul reviewed deadlines for key actions before and after the merger, as well as the status. They include such action points as preparation of key reports, essential meetings, selecting district leaders, club and district officer training, and merging the websites.
- **Transition Committee Responsibilities:** Paul reviewed status of key elements that need to be merged include the Websites, Zoom and Eventbrite Accounts, Assets, and Email Addresses. They also involve identifying district leaders, joint communications, year-end financials, recognitions, district and club officer training, incentives, and 2025/2026 district contests.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- District officers are reminded to check the district websites for details on June Club Officer Training.
- District officers are reminded to update their club officer list in Club Central to ensure the newly elected Club President or Secretary is able to vote at the Annual Business meeting, taking place in August.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Presiding Officer Gary Schmidt thanked everyone for their help with the May 27 2025 Joint District 21-96 Business Meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 PM.