
68TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – MINUTES

3:30-4:00 pm Reception & Refreshments

1. Call to Order, Greetings & Land Acknowledgment – Paul Rossi, President

In our work towards a community where no one is left behind, KW Counselling Services gratefully acknowledges that we are on the traditional territory of the Anishnawbe, Haudenosaunee and Neutral Peoples and on the Haldimand Tract which runs almost 10 kilometres deep on either side of the Grand River.

2. Approval of Minutes of 67th Annual General Meeting – Paul Rossi

Elaine Read brought the Motion: *I move that the minutes of the 67th Annual General Meeting held May 22, 2018 be approved.*

It was seconded by Michael Snyders and passed.

3. Treasurer's Report – Ameer Abdulla for Neil Bailey, Treasurer

Ameer noted that KWCS had a strong year financially in 2018 due to various one-time revenue streams and tight expense management. Health Connect Counselling revenue was up \$126K which was due to one-time timing differences from 2017, Ontario Trillium Foundation funding was up \$178K and General Donation and Special Events were up \$70K which together offset United Way Funding cuts of \$102K. The net result was a \$128K Excess of Revenue over Expenses in the Operating Fund. Contractual obligations and service delivery targets were met.

KWCS continues to have a strong Balance Sheet and cash position and made the strategic decision in 2018 to invest a portion of long term investments in Exchange Traded Funds for higher returns to help fund programs.

Ameer thanked the entire team for all of their hard work in achieving this success. Leslie Josling, before she left, and Diane McGregor and Noel Blake subsequently deserve special mention but it takes the entire team to deliver strong results. In addition, Scott Williams' work in fundraising and grant writing is tireless.

A word of caution is necessary for the future as we rely more and more on one-time funding from donations and grants as United Way funding reduces and Ministry and Regional Funding does not keep up with inflation. The funding landscape is very difficult and it is hard to predict where it is going from a provincial perspective despite increasing community mental health and counselling needs. KWCS delivers incredible value for funding dollars but must constantly search for new sustainable funding and projects to stay in a surplus.

Michael Snyders brought the Motion: *I move that the financial statements for the year ending December 31, 2018 be approved.*

It was seconded by Kristine Schmeiss and passed.

4. Appointment of the Auditors for 2019 – Ameer Abdulla for Neil Bailey

Ameer noted that the auditors, as usual, did an excellent job. He thanked Noel Blake for helping to facilitate a smooth audit and recommended that we engage Clarke, Starke, and Diegel again for 2019.

Elaine Read brought the *Motion: I move that Clarke, Starke, and Diegel be appointed Auditors for the Year 2019.*

It was seconded by Denise Derbez and passed.

5. Confirmation of the Acts of the Board for the preceding year – Paul Rossi

Michael Snyders brought the *Motion: I move that with regard to the Acts of the Board of Directors for the preceding year, be it resolved that all Acts, contracts, By-Laws, proceedings, appointments, and elections made, done, and taken by the Directors and Officers of the Corporation since the date of the last Annual Meeting of the Members, are hereby approved and confirmed.*

It was seconded by Elaine Read and passed.

6. Recognition – Paul Rossi & Elaine Read

Resignations from Board of Directors:

- **Bettina Burgess (2014-2018) – Human Resources Committee**
 - **Andy Mao (2017-2019) – Financial Management Committee**
 - **Glenn Marcus (2015-2018) – Fundraising Events Committee, Jeans ‘n Scrubs**
 - **Manju Rose (2016-2019) – Fundraising Events Committee**
 - **Aaron Stauch (2018-2019) – ED Recruitment Committee**
 - **Shelley White (2016-2019) – Financial Management Committee, Treasurer**
 - **Cong-Rong Xie (2010-2019) – Board VP, and President, Strategic Planning Committee**
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- **Neil Bailey has completed his second term and has stepped into the Treasurer role.**
 - **Elaine Read has completed her second term and is stepping into the President role.**
 - **Michael Snyders has completed his second term and is moving into the Vice President role.**

7. Nomination & Election of Directors – Paul Rossi (presenting nominees for election)

Elaine Read brought the *Motion: I move that Ameer Abdulla, Raheem Adam, Jeff Desbiens, Jodi Marner, Amanda Reed, Kimberly Culkin, and Maria de Boer (See Bios attached) be elected for a three year term and; that Neil Bailey, Elaine Read, and Michael Snyders be re-elected for a third three-year term commencing May 21, 2019.*

It was seconded by Kristine Schmeiss and passed.

8. President’s Report – Paul Rossi

Paul noted that today’s environment for the social services sector is more challenging than ever. The recent change in Ontario’s government has led to funding cuts across the sector, and we have experienced a shift in the last several years in how people are giving to charities. United Way has seen annual declines in their fundraising through workplace campaigns which has, unfortunately, directly impacted KW Counselling Services. We are experiencing difficulty in maintaining unrestricted funds that allow us to keep the doors open.

All of these reductions are coming at a time when the demand for mental health counselling is increasing. Paul said it is imperative that people not only maintain their level of giving, but increase it so that KW Counselling Services can maintain the level of care that the community has become accustomed to.

Paul noted that giving can be done in many ways: financial donations can be made in a lump sum or monthly installments, people can get tax savings by donating securities, and last but not least, volunteering is crucial. Paul closed by asking people to consider how they can give to KW Counselling Services over the next 12 months so that the agency can overcome its funding challenges. Paul also thanked everyone who has volunteered over the last year.

9. Executive Director's Report – Noel Blake and Diane McGregor, Interim Co-Executive Directors
Noel introduced himself and noted that he would be speaking today about how the agency has transitioned and transformed itself over the latter half of 2018 and early 2019. Noel noted that the agency has missed Leslie Josling since her move to Family Counselling Centre of Brant in October 2018, but that we have kept in touch and wish her great success in her new role. Leslie could not be with us today but she sends her warm regards to the membership, the staff, and the board.

Noel shared the following quotation about transitions: “Transitions themselves are not the issue, but it’s how well you respond to their challenges!” He noted that He and Diane could not have stepped into the Co-Interim ED roles successfully without the support of the board, our funders, and fellow employees. Everyone stepped up in their roles to aid in the transition and some people changed their roles in order to make this work.

Noel noted that we have changed the name of our “Management Team” to “Leadership Team” following the addition to the team of some new members. Noel thanked all members of the Leadership Team: Allison Bird Brenner, Veena Kaur, Dejana Bjelogric, Carolyn Wiens, Sharon Wallace, and Scott Williams.

Noel noted that over the last eight months the agency has not stood still nor operated in a holding pattern. We have continued to transform. For example, we are working on a major change in our case management system away from a system called Caseworks and towards a system called Penelope. This change is being made in collaboration with the other Waterloo Region counselling agencies. Also, we have effectively transitioned away from offering Employee Assistance Programs and are now focused on local Corporate Counselling contracts.

Noel reported that we have continued to operate our “grant writing machine” with a huge amount of input from Scott Williams who has continued to seek funding from our current partners and find new grant opportunities. We have found new sources of funding from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Women’s Crisis Services of Waterloo Region, the City of Cambridge, and the Cambridge & North Dumfries Community Foundation.

Our accreditation with Canadian Centre for Accreditation is up for renewal in 2020 and we are already working towards that goal with major contributions from Sharon Wallace.

As Paul noted, we are having to transform due to changes in government and reduced funding from some of our long-term partners. 2018 was a good year, but we know that 2019 and beyond will be more difficult.

Noel began to wrap up with a quotation from therapist Suzy Ross: "Transformation is an ongoing process that tends to appear ordinary, when, in fact, something extraordinary is taking place." Noel said that what he sees as extraordinary is how everyone in the agency has continued to work so hard to make the agency successful and relevant to what is going on in the community, and how they have all made it look so ordinary. Diane and I are truly grateful for all this hard work. Of his Co-ED, Diane, Noel said Diane is warm, caring, passionate about her work, and an incredible collaborator. He thanked Diane for the opportunity to work closely sharing a role and responsibilities with her.

Diane echoed Noel in saying that 2018 held dramatic transformations for the organization, which called on everyone to step up and do their work a bit differently. Diane expressed her gratitude for all the staff and board members who have gone above and beyond their work.

Diane noted that 2018 marked our 68th year of service to the citizens of Waterloo Region. We have always looked to the community to help us understand the issues people are facing and help us design the services needed to address these issues. In 2018, we served 17,513 people – a lot of voices to listen to!

Diane noted the example of our expansion of an OK2BME Youth Group to Cambridge based on feedback from youth in that city that travelling to Kitchener was too great a barrier. The success of the pilot group has led to an increase in our annualized OK2BME funding as well as grants from the City of Cambridge, and the Community Foundation of Cambridge and North Dumfries.

Diane also noted the expansion of our Multicultural Leadership Development Training based on feedback from participants. The current participants have now completed the first part of this year's training and are working in their new community placements.

Diane noted that we are members of 15-18 different community planning tables and committees. It is crucial for us to work with community partners not just cooperatively, but collaboratively. Diane highlighted our membership in the Counselling Collaborative of Waterloo Region and the Wellbeing Waterloo Region project.

Diane noted that the new and emerging policies from the provincial government are challenging us to think on our feet, be nimble, and work together. She explained that collaboration is at the heart of what we do, and that change is not new to us. Change is always possible when relationships are enhanced.

10. Adjournment of Meeting – Paul Rossi

Paul Rossi brought the Motion: ***I move that the 68th Annual General Meeting be adjourned.***
It was seconded by Michael Snyders and passed.

11. Volunteer of the Year Award – Dejana Bjelogrljic

a. Presented to Cathy Read-Wilson

Dejana noted that Cathy has volunteered as a therapist in our Walk In Counselling Clinic for 2.5 years. In that time, she has seen 189 clients in that time and delivered nearly 250 hours of service.

12. Guest Speaker – Cynthia Martin, Wellbeing Waterloo Region

Cynthia, a police officer on loan to the Wellbeing Waterloo Region project, noted that the vision of Wellbeing Waterloo Region is incredibly well-aligned with that of KW Counselling Services: “A community where everyone thrives and no one is left behind.” She noted that Wellbeing Waterloo Region is striving to build impact in three “big idea” areas: Affordable Housing, Healthy Children & Youth, and Social Inclusion.

Cynthia stressed the importance of this collaborative effort. No policy, or government department alone can fix the social problems we face. We have to work in collaboration. We have principles and have to be courageous, we want to be transformative, adaptive, inclusive, and equitable.

Cynthia shared some results from the Wellbeing Waterloo Region survey that looked at the trends in the three big idea areas.

13. Closing Remarks – Paul Rossi

Paul thanked everyone for taking the time to join us today. He thanked our program funders, sponsors, donors, and volunteers, and thanked the staff for their hard work over the last year. Paul reminded everyone of the following upcoming events:

- May 22, 2019 – Leejay Levene Memorial Calendar Launch
- June 18, 2019 – Home Hardware Charity Golf Tournament
- September 26 and October 3, 2019 – Surprise Movie Night
- February 1, 2020 – 80s Dance Party
- Next AGM: Tuesday May 26, 2020

Ameer Abdulla: Ameer Abdulla holds a HBBA degree from Wilfrid Laurier University with an Accounting concentration and has held progressive senior roles at EY Private Client Services providing tax and advisory support for clients. He gives back to the community through his volunteer work in a leadership role in his church and has also been involved in a campaign committee for United Way. In his spare time he enjoys gardening, golf and soccer.

Raheem Adam: Raheem Adam completed his Bachelor of Science degree (Honors Computer Science) at McGill University in Montreal where he graduated at the top of the graduating class. Raheem started his career with Google in 2013 and works there as a software engineer. He has demonstrated his interest and passion in the value of connection through his involvement in organizing events in the technology community. He has also volunteered with the Alzheimer's Society, the Community Action Service in Nairobi and volunteered in Developer Relations with the Blue Dot program. In addition to English, Raheem speaks Swahili and French and enjoys traveling, piano and improv theatre.

Jeff Desbiens: Jeff Desbiens has been the Vice President, Human Resources at Economical Insurance for the past three years. As of April 1, Jeff will be transitioning into a leadership role of Economical's Broker Assistance Centre. Jeff is a pragmatic and hands-on HR Executive and business partner experienced in aligning HR strategic plans to positively impact the achievement of business results and employee engagement. Capitalizing on strong leadership and team building skills, Jeff thrives on creating and delivering HR services in complex organizations.

Jeff holds a bachelor of Commerce from the University of Windsor, an MBA from Royal Roads University and is a Certified Human Resources Leader. Jeff lives in Waterloo with his wife and three children. Jeff and his family canvass for the Heart and Stroke foundation and are active supporters of the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto.

Jodi Marner: Jodi Marner holds a Bachelor of Commerce that she obtained from University of Guelph. With over 27 years of experience in business and HR, Jodi helps companies achieve organizational greatness by aligning talent to business strategies. She is a passionate HR expert, focusing on people being successful in their roles and helping create inclusive cultures. Jodi holds a senior role in HR and has past experience volunteering for Kids up Front and donation drives. She resides in Waterloo with her two teenage boys and is an outdoor enthusiast!

Amanda Reed: Amanda graduated with high honours from Sheridan College's Paralegal program in 2011 and was her class's Valedictorian. During her studies, Amanda was awarded the "Passion For Law and Learning Award" in recognition of her academic achievements and dedication. She has worked for a Legal Aid community legal clinic, and is currently the leading litigation paralegal at a local firm.

Amanda was a volunteer member of Sheridan College's Paralegal Professional Advisory Council and has volunteered with an animal sanctuary, a neighbourhood Syrian family sponsorship group, and makes quilts for children living in foster care. Amanda is an avid runner and competitive snowboarder.

Kimberly Culkin is a Global HR Senior Leader for opentext, supporting employees and executives within the Corporate Function. Her career in HR began in 2007, when she moved from Financial Services to the field of HR, as a Recruiter. Kimberly studied Criminology, Human Resources Management and received her Certified Human Resources Leader designation in 2011. Kimberly is a highly energetic, results oriented HR Leader and has spent the last 10+ years working throughout the Waterloo Region in both the Public and Private sector. She is a proud member of the 100+ Women Who Care Waterloo Region and consistently looks for opportunities to stay connected within her community.

Maria de Boer worked at Extend-A-Family (EAFWR) for 35 years, 32 of them as Executive Director. Prior to EAFWR Maria worked at a variety of hospitals both in the USA and Canada as a medical record librarian. In 1980 she took on the role of Administrative Assistant for a research project in the Jane/Finch area and began her love affair with community development. Maria holds a BSW and MSW.

Maria has volunteered as a member of the District Health Council, both member and President of Jane/Finch Community Centre, Board member of Childcare Network, council member of Stirling Mennonite Church, and is currently on the Board of the Volunteer Association of St. Mary's Hospital.

Maria is retired, loves to read, attend the theatre and movies, get involved in politics and spend time with her friends and family. She is a very happy and involved grandparent.