
69TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – MINUTES

4:00 pm Start

1. Call to Order, Greetings & Land Acknowledgment – Elaine Read, President

Elaine thanked everyone for joining us at our first ever virtual AGM, and provided some instructions for how the Zoom meeting would work.

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 68th Annual General Meeting – Elaine Read

Elaine noted the Minutes from the last AGM had been posted on our website. There was no discussion.

*Kristine Schmeiss brought the Motion: **I move that the minutes of the 68th Annual General Meeting held May 21, 2019 be approved.***

It was seconded by Kimberly Culkin, and carried.

3. Treasurer's Report – Neil Bailey, Treasurer

Neil reported that the agency had a mixed year financially in 2019 due to a \$216,000 reduction in revenue while expenses remained well managed. KWCS had a number of one-time revenue streams in 2018 which did not repeat in 2019 including higher Health Connect Counselling revenue and a large one time donation. 2019 saw a wind down of our Employee Assistance contracts as they were not cash flow positive, our program with Family and Children's Services came to an end, and United Way funding was once again reduced. The net result was an \$82,000 Deficiency of Revenue over Expenses in the Operating Fund. This was offset to some degree by investment income in our Capital and Emergency Funds for an overall Deficiency of \$37,000. Contractual obligations and service delivery targets were met as we continue to stretch to meet the needs of the community.

Neil noted that we continue to have a strong Balance Sheet and Cash position in order to fund this deficiency but recognize that deficiencies can't be the norm. We were able to maintain services in 2019 but as revenues reduce, we must manage wisely to be sustainable.

Neil thanked the entire team for all of their hard work in 2019. "Diane McGregor, Noel Blake and Rebecca Webb deserve special mention but it takes the entire team to deliver services."

"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. It is still early in 2020 but the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant detrimental impact on event fundraising and revenue while changing the way that we service clients. This, in all likelihood, will be offset by Federal Pandemic Programs where applications are in progress. The funding landscape is very difficult while the need in the community has never been greater. KW

Counselling Services delivers incredible value for funding dollars but must constantly search for new sustainable funding and projects to stay in a surplus. My major wish for 2020 and beyond is for long term sustainable funding.”

There was no discussion.

*Ameer Abdulla brought the Motion: **I move that the financial statements for the year ending December 31, 2019 be approved.***

It was seconded by Neil Bailey, and carried.

4. Appointment of the Auditors for 2020 – Neil Bailey

Neil thanked Clarke, Starke, and Diegel for working on our audit again this year. A special thanks to Angelique Gray who attended our last board meeting and who is here today.

There was no discussion.

*Neil Bailey brought the Motion: **I move that Clarke, Starke, and Diegel be appointed Auditors for the Year 2020.***

It was seconded by Ameer Abdulla, and carried.

5. Confirmation of the Acts of the Board for the preceding year – Elaine Read

*Kimberly Culkin 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 Kristine Schmeiss, and carried.

6. Recognition – Elaine Read & Kristine Schmeiss

We recognized the five Board members who left the agency in 2019-2020.

- **Raheem Adam (2018-2019)**
 - Kristine Schmeiss thanked Raheem for his dedication to the Board and the Fundraising Events Committee. We appreciate Raheem’s critical thinking and willingness to learn.
- **Denise Derbez (2017-2019)**
 - Kristine Schmeiss thanked Denise for her contributions to the Board and the Fundraising Events Committee, noting Denise’s exceptional volunteerism at our events, and her creative thinking.
- **Kyle Cleaver (2011-2019)**
 - Paul Rossi thanked Kyle for his dedicated service to the Board and the Human Resources Committee. He noted that he hoped Kyle could return to the agency in the future.
- **Michael Snyders (2012-2019)**
 - Paul Rossi thanked Michael for his incredible contributions to the Human Resources Committee, for leading us through our previous Strategic Planning process, for his work on our Executive Director Recruitment, and for his brief time as our Vice President on the Board

Management Committee. Paul noted that he hoped Michael would be able to return to the agency in the future.

- **Paul Rossi (2011-2020)**

- Elaine Read thanked Paul for his incredible dedication to the agency, pointing out that there are not many people who are able to complete three full terms as Board members. Paul's incredible spirit of volunteerism benefitted our Fundraising Events Committee immensely. Paul served admirably as Board President and has been a great help to Elaine as she took on that role. Paul has graciously agreed to stay on our Board Management Committee as an advisor for the next year.

7. Nomination & Election of Directors – Elaine Read (presenting nominee for election)

Elaine introduced Lynda Chau who has already made herself an invaluable member of the team on our Fundraising Events Committee and Strategic Planning Committee since joining us in October 2019.

*Jodi Marnier brought the Motion: **I move that Lynda Chau** (See Bio attached) **be elected for a three-year term commencing May 26, 2020.***

It was seconded by Kimberly Culkin, and carried.

8. President's Report – Elaine Read

Elaine reported that the 2019 year was a year of change for KW Counselling Services. "I would like to take a few minutes to reflect on the past year, discuss some of the changes we have seen at KW Counselling and introduce you to the members of our Board."

Our most significant change early on in the year was the addition of a new Executive Director. "I would like to officially welcome Rebecca Webb as our Executive Director as this is her first AGM. Rebecca joined us on July 15th soon after the prior year's AGM and she became the fourth Executive Director in KW Counselling's almost 70 year history. Rebecca came to us from the Waterloo-Wellington LHIN, with experience from CMHA and the Waterloo Wellington CCAC."

Elaine reported that the selection of our Executive Director was almost a year long process that was led by Director Aaron Stauch and the ED Recruitment Committee comprised of Paul Rossi, Michael Snyders, Shelley White, and herself. "We entered into a comprehensive process with the Board to ensure that we were able to develop criteria for the appropriate candidate and determined that as a "Values driven organization", we would take a values based approach to our selection process. This approach was extremely successful and helped us to select Rebecca who demonstrated the values of KW Counselling through her leadership behaviour and experience. With Rebecca's background in strategy in the healthcare sector, we felt that she was the right choice to help KW Counselling navigate the challenges and changes anticipated in the mental health sector."

Prior to Rebecca joining our team in July and after we said goodbye to our former Executive Director Leslie Josling, Noel Blake and Diane McGregor of our Leadership team took on the responsibility of Interim Co-Executive Directors. "Both Noel and Diane did a fantastic job ensuring that the needs of the agency were met during this period with a focus on both our people and our community. What really impressed me during this time was how well the Leadership Team pulled together to support Noel and Diane. All members of the Leadership Team took on new and different responsibilities to support Noel

and Diane through this interim period. I would like to say a big Thank you to Noel and Diane for all the effort that they put into supporting KW Counselling during this period and to all the members of the Leadership Team who provided support to Noel and Diane.”

Elaine reported that throughout the year, we have continued to be able to offer our signature programs and services including individual and group counselling, Walk In Counselling Clinic, OK2BME programming, and Parenting with Passion initiatives. “With the increased need in the Waterloo Region for services, we would not have been able to meet this need without the continued support of our funders and partners in particular the Ministry of Community and Social Services, the Region of Waterloo, the United Way Waterloo Region Communities, the Hallman Foundation, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Astley Family Foundation, KW Community Foundation and the RBC Foundation. Thank you to our funders and partners as well as all our donors who have helped to support us throughout the year through our annual campaign and fundraising initiatives.”

Elaine noted that another significant change over the year was turnover in our Board of Directors. “Over the past year, I have been very proud of the Board and the engagement and efforts of all our Directors. We have 12 members of the Board and during 2019, we introduced six new Board members who have integrated very well into our team. Our process to recruit new Board members is focused on identifying key skillsets and selecting Board members who meet those needs, are passionate about our Community and are dedicated to the mental health sector and the services that we provide. With this significant amount of change in our Board, I would like to take a few minutes to introduce our Board members to you:

Our Finance Committee consists of Neil Bailey, and Ameer Abdulla. Neil has been a Board member for many years and Ameer was introduced to the Board at last year’s AGM. Both Neil and Ameer are dedicated Board members with strong financial backgrounds in the banking and financial services sector. Neil and Ameer have been integral in helping the board members understand the financial risks that exist for the organization, helping us navigate through these risks and providing direction to assist in making strong fiscally responsible decisions and maintain Stability in our Finances.

Our HR Committee consists of Jeff Desbiens, Kim Culkin, Maria De Boer and Jodi Marner all Board members who started with us in 2019. Each of Jeff, Kim and Jodi are professionals in Human Resources in the Waterloo Region and bring with them a tremendous amount of experience to assist us with our talent initiatives. Maria’s 35 years of experience in the social services sector as an Executive Director and volunteer with a number of organizations brings a wealth of governance experience to the team. Together this committee has had a keen focus throughout the year on change management and the related impact on our people. Their focus has helped us to meet one of our strategic pillars of being an Employer of Choice.

On our Fundraising Events Committee we have Kristine Schmeiss, Lynda Chau, Amanda Reed and Rebecca Wagner. The members of this committee have backgrounds in banking, strategic planning, legal services and government and all exhibit a significant amount of energy and passion for fundraising. The team has been focused on developing a fundraising strategy with both short term and long term objectives and has been very innovative in putting together new initiatives and events while

at the present time assessing the impact of the pandemic and how fundraising will need to evolve in the pandemic and post pandemic period.

Finally our Board Management Committee consists of Kristine Schmeiss, Paul Rossi and myself. Collectively, we bring to the committee almost 20 years of history and experience as members of the Board for KW Counselling. Throughout the year, our team has been focused on ensuring that the Board members are armed with all the information that they require to maintain a focus on risk, exercise good governance and make strong and informed decisions on behalf of the Agency.”

Elaine reported that the development of our Strategic Plan and preparing KW Counselling for the future will be significant activities this year. “Watch out for communication in the coming weeks as our team reaches out to our clients, community and stakeholders through surveys and focus groups to better understand how we can better serve the community and to develop our strategic plan. I am confident that we have the right team in place to develop a plan that is community focused, people centric, collaborative, and fiscally responsible.”

Elaine noted that as with many not-for-profit organizations, one of the challenges that the agency continues to struggle with is ensuring we maintain Stability in our Finances. “Noel Blake, our CFO and our Treasurer, Neil Bailey have done an excellent job working with the members of the Board helping us to understand the risks and uncertainties related to our finances and helping the board and leadership team develop strategies to address these risks. What we constantly have to balance is the challenge of increasing costs due to inflation with funding revenues that remain flat or in decline. This constantly requires us to challenge our costs and be more creative about how we deliver service, in particular in the current environment. A focus on innovation and collaboration within the counselling community in Waterloo Region is key to achieving that success.”

Elaine noted that we have seen examples of how innovation and collaboration have achieved success in our recent response to the COVID-19 pandemic. “I am extremely proud of the KW Counselling response to COVID-19. Like many organizations, there was an immediate requirement for change and our team needed to mobilize quickly. In this period of high stress and anxiety, it was imperative that we move quickly to continue to serve our community and transition from focused in person services to video counselling and online group sessions that were easily accessible in a very short time frame. The leadership team was focused on ensuring our response was communicated on a timely basis to all our stakeholders and kept all apprised of the changes.

We were very fortunate to have been awarded a Seed Grant, through the Ontario Trillium Foundation in 2017, to deliver video counselling services. This grant allowed us to put the technological infrastructure for video counselling in place during 2018 and 2019, to develop policies and procedures for the delivery of the service and to begin the delivery of video counselling. When the State of Emergency was announced, KW Counselling already had the infrastructure, training and experience in place to deliver this service. And although I can’t say it was seamless as there was lots to do to get our people set-up and prepared to perform the services from home while maintaining privacy and confidentiality in all instances, this forethought and funding did make it possible. I was very impressed with how the KW Counselling team worked together to make it happen and support each other through the process.”

Elaine reported that a recent change which is allowing us to be more collaborative within the Counselling community in Waterloo Region is the implementation of a new case management system, Penelope. “This implementation, due to a grant from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care through the LHIN and the Counselling Collaborative of Waterloo Region has allowed members of the Collaborative to migrate to a common platform for case management. This new resource provides the opportunity for increased collaboration across the counselling agencies in Waterloo Region to continue to better serve our community.”

Elaine noted that the province has demonstrated a strong commitment to mental health in Ontario with its announcements of support for mental health and addictions services including publicly funded therapy. Additional funding for services provided throughout the pandemic continue to support that commitment. “I believe that the changes that I have highlighted for you today that have been implemented throughout the year in 2019 demonstrate that KW Counselling is poised to be a strong contributor to the delivery of enhanced mental health services to the Waterloo Region. This will enable KW Counselling to continue to deliver on our Vision of *A Community where no one is left behind and positive relationships are valued as our highest achievement.*”

9. Executive Director’s Report – Rebecca Webb, Executive Director

Rebecca thanked everyone for joining us for our first virtual AGM, and her first AGM as Executive Director of KW Counselling Services. “I’ve been with the agency for just shy of a year now and I’d like to say what a pleasure it’s been to get to know and work with our tremendous staff. The agency has a wonderful culture of acceptance and it’s felt wonderful to be welcomed into the KW Counselling Services family.”

Rebecca noted that this report is about 2019, but that it would have to be delivered through the lens of the impact of COVID-19 in our community. “For context, I will start with the same message I have been repeating with our staff: our goal right now is to do the most amount of good - according to what our community needs from us in this present, evolving moment - with the resources at our disposal. It is every bit as simple and as complicated as that. How we do that is perhaps the complicated bit. I think the short answer is – we lean into what we have always been.

Whatever changes we have seen over the years at the program, staff, board level, or even to our funding there are some fundamentals at the bedrock of KW Counselling Services: We are an agency that is innovative, that welcomes everyone and lives our Vision that nobody is left behind, that is deeply tuned in to the needs of the community and how they are shifting and adapts to meet that need. Seen in this light, what is the story of 2019?

In 2019 we noticed changes in who was presenting at our Walk In Counselling Clinic and the types of support they were looking for. One of the big things we noticed is that we had couples and families arriving at our walk in. For anyone who may not be aware, our Walk In Counselling Clinic was designed to be a weekly, no appointment needed, clinic where people could get a single session of therapy, but it was envisioned as individual therapy. Our community needed something else, and they came through our doors trusting that we could help.

The solutions were not easy or obvious. These are more complex cases. There are unique safety and privacy concerns that need to be addressed in making these sessions effective. And so our staff did a global review of the available literature, and built the training and the protocols to support delivering service in a new way. As our Walk In Counselling Clinic model evolves, I think it's important to remember just how hard our staff, students and volunteers work to make this service feasible. As far as we know, ours is still the largest Walk In Counselling service in Canada, and perhaps the world. We have helped thousands of people by making counselling accessible in this way and that is worth celebrating.

In 2019 Our Parenting Education and Supports team was busy in the second year of the Parenting Now project. This is a huge project and a great deal of thought and planning and consultation went into how it would be delivered. Even so, when the solutions we put into the community weren't getting the results we hoped for, the team explored with clients, understood the why, and pivoted. We removed some online features and replaced them with opportunities for parents to have phone calls with members of our team. This connection between parents has proven to be at the heart of the project. With the great depth of experience we have in this area, the team never took it for granted that they had all the answers – they listened, and learned, and adapted.

Our OK2BME program for LGBTQ2+ youth is seeing an increased demand, as the visibility and reputation of the program continues to grow. We are thrilled to announce that we have been successful in securing another three-year Grow Grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. Even so, the need for this service is expected to continue to exceed demand. We are working with more partners, including Family Counselling and Support Services Guelph, to increase community capacity and the reach of this programming. We are also excited to enter into a partnership with SPECTRUM, Waterloo Region's Rainbow Community space, to provide counselling for transgender and gender diverse people.

And on the note of partnership I want to say how grateful I am for the welcome and support and hard work of the Counselling Collaborative of Waterloo Region. This group of six like-minded agencies providing similar supports throughout the region has been working closely together for years towards more coordinated services. I believe the state of emergency unlocked a whole new level of cooperation, sharing of resources and mutual support and I am so grateful for the groundwork that was laid for that to happen long before I entered the scene.

All of which is to say, we know who we are. We can stand firmly rooted in that and know that it is deep in our DNA to adapt and find new ways to be what our community needs most. That's what I mean when I say we will lean into what we have always been in order to do the most amount of good with the resources at our disposal. Because our resources are formidable.

We have amazingly gifted staff, and I won't shy away here from how grueling the work has sometimes been over the past two months to keep looking after our clients while re-inventing our workflow on the fly and also dealing with the stressors and uncertainty in their own lives while working from their homes. Thank you for that.

We have a Board who is deeply committed and engaged which is an absolute gift as an Executive Director. You put in the time and you ask hard questions and your dedication to making us the best

possible version of ourselves is evident. And I also want to say thank you to all our volunteers – some of whom provide direct service and some of whom give their time and energy to committee work and fundraising and all of whom are vital in order for us to keep doing what we do.

And finally, we have a community who trusts us and in that trust lies a pact that we will continue to honour, come what may. 70 years as Waterloo Region’s community mental health agency is no small thing. KW Counselling Services is a very special organization that has thrived – and helped our community to thrive – for generations. That won’t be undone by COVID-19. But we can learn from it. We are in what promises to be a very interesting strategic planning year and we will be engaging with the community to find out what you need from us, and what we ought to be building towards as we continue to work towards our vision of a community where no one is left behind.”

10. Adjournment of Meeting – Elaine Read

*Maria de Boer brought the Motion: **I move that the 69th Annual General Meeting be adjourned.** It was seconded by Amanda Reed, and carried.*

11. Volunteer of the Year Award – Kristine Schmeiss

Kristine Schmeiss presented the award to Sonya Anderson. Kristine noted that volunteers are essential to our organization. In 2019, the Fundraising Events Committee helped raise over \$120,000. This was not possible without volunteers.

Sonya volunteers with multiple organizations. Her enthusiasm and engagement in both planning and executing events is truly outstanding. Sonya began working with us on the Jeans ‘n’ Scrubs committee in 2015 before moving to our Fundraising Events Committee. In 2019, Kristine estimated that Sonya had provided well over 100 volunteer hours. “Sonya is an outstanding, committed and passionate volunteer. You make a difference for KW Counselling Services and we’re lucky to have you.”

12. Guest Speaker – Alison Pearson, Manager, Children and Youth Planning Table of Waterloo Region

Elaine thanked Alison Pearson for joining us today. Alison is the Manager of the Children and Youth Planning Table of Waterloo Region, of which KW Counselling Services is a member. Alison spoke to us about community collaboration and the resources for children, youth and families in our community including Family Compass.

13. Closing Remarks – Elaine Read

Elaine thanked everyone who joined us today.

Watch kwcounselling.com for details about our upcoming 2020 events:

- Surprise Movie Night – hopefully this fall
- Next AGM: Tuesday May 25, 2021

New Director Bio

Lynda Chau:

A strategic marketing leader with over 20 years of experience, Lynda specializes in helping helping companies uncover their compelling purpose and use it to align strategy to execution, and to inspire employees, customers, and partners. With expertise in brand development, market strategy, and ecosystem building, Lynda has helped companies to not only lead their markets, but to also redefine them. Lynda is currently serving as the VP of Marketing at Clearpath Robotics. Lynda has also founded a market strategy consulting practice called CommonFrame and served as Chief Marketing Officer at Miovision. Lynda holds a Bachelor of Commerce in Marketing from the University of Alberta. She spends her free time attempting to keep up with her young daughter, Monica.