
70TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

4:30 pm Start

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

2. Approval of Minutes of 69th Annual General Meeting – Elaine Read

Everyone who made a financial contribution to the agency in the last 12 months is a voting member of the agency. Minutes are on the website for review. Motions are voted on using the polling feature of zoom.

Motion: I move that the minutes of the 69th Annual General Meeting held May 26, 2020 be approved.

Jeff Desbiens seconded Maria deBoer **Motion carried**

3. Treasurer's Report – Neil Bailey, Treasurer

KWCS was having a challenging year financially in 2020 due to the pandemic as counselling moved virtual with significant reductions in fee for service revenue which dropped close to \$100,000 on the year and event style fundraising which dropped \$116,000. Our financial situation turned around as our funders and governments realized the impact on Charities and the essential need for Counselling Services as the pandemic raged. As detailed in Note 14 of the financial statement, KWCS received \$324M in unrestricted pandemic funding including \$300M from The Hallman Foundation, \$153M in restricted pandemic funding and \$388M from the Canadian Government in wage subsidy.

The net effect of this was a \$587M surplus on the year as plans to utilize the pandemic funding stretch into F2021 and F2022. Contractual obligations and service delivery targets were met as we continue to stretch to meet the rapidly increasing needs of the community.

KWCS continues to have a strong Balance Sheet and Cash position. This provides comfort as we typically begin each year with a deficit budget and the management team works tirelessly to turn it around. KWCS delivers incredible value for funding \$'s but must constantly search for new sustainable funding and projects.

I would like to thank the entire Team for all of their hard work in 2020. We all know it was a very difficult year. Noel Blake and Rebecca Webb deserve special mention but it takes the entire team to deliver services especially with the changes and stress in the system in 2020.

Thank you.

Motion: I move that the financial statements for the year ending December 31, 2020 be approved. –

Moved by Colleen Heinrichs and seconded Ilidia Sa Melo. **Motion carried.**

4. Appointment of the Auditors for 2021 – Neil Bailey

Thank you to Clarke, Starke, and Diegel for working on our audit again this year. Thanks to Angelique Gray who attended our last board meeting and who is here today.

Vision: *A community where no one is left behind, a community where positive relationships are valued as our highest achievement.*

Mission: *KW Counselling Services provides excellence in counselling, public education, and training. We engage with our community at the individual, family and systems level, promoting positive changes that will lead to fulfilled and productive lives.*

Motion: I move that Clarke, Starke, and Diegel be appointed Auditors for the Year 2021. Moved by Neil Bailey seconded – Jeff Desbiens **Motion carried.**

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

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. Moved by Rebecca Wagner seconded Amanda Reed. **Motion carried**

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

Motion: I move that Soha Masri, Jennifer Sandison, Melanie Van Alphen, Colleen Heinrich, and Ildia Sa Melo (See Bios attached) be elected for a three-year term commencing May 25, 2021. and– that Kristine Schmeiss and Rebecca Wagner be re-elected for a second three-year term commencing May 25, 2021. Moved by Neil Bailey, seconded Jeff Desbiens. **Motion carried.**

7. Recognition – Resignations from Board of Directors:

- **Jodi Marner (2019-2020) – HR Committee**
- **Jennifer Sandison (2020-2021) Fundraising Events Committee.**

Jodi and Jennifer were thanked for their time and energy while serving on the board and respective committees.

8. President's Report – Elaine Read

Reflecting upon the past year for KW Counselling, it has been a year of resilience and change. We have seen the incredible ability of our leadership and staff to adapt to the changes imposed with the onset of the pandemic and continue to deliver service to our community as well as the ability to learn from those experiences and integrate those learnings into future delivery of service.

It has been a busy year!

We embarked on our strategic planning process with the Board this past year. Thank-you to Lynda Chau for facilitating our strategic planning meeting and to Maria de Boer for Chairing the strategic planning committee. The knowledge, enthusiasm, and experience that you brought with you led to an engaging strategic review and has delivered a strong forward-looking Strategic Plan. A plan that is focused on collaboration and innovation to continue to build on the accessibility, responsiveness and quality of our service while maintaining our financial stability.

We continue to see an increase in the need in our community for counselling services with call volumes rising substantially; consequently, accessibility and responsiveness is a priority and the first pillar of our strategic plan. We have embarked on several different plans to address this priority. One of these initiatives highlights our focus on collaboration and together with partner agencies Carizon and Family Counselling Center of Cambridge North Dumfries we are working towards the design and implementation of centralized intake which will streamline the intake process for all of our clients. This is an ambitious project

Vision: *A community where no one is left behind, a community where positive relationships are valued as our highest achievement.*

Mission: *KW Counselling Services provides excellence in counselling, public education, and training. We engage with our community at the individual, family and systems level, promoting positive changes that will lead to fulfilled and productive lives.*

that will improve access and responsiveness for all members of our community and continue to decrease the impact on wait lists of the increasing need for service.

This theme is continued in the second pillar of our strategic plan which is Collaboration. We are focused on providing whole community solutions and cannot do that on our own without the support of our partners. We also recognize that stronger solutions to community challenges are developed when we come together. Many initiatives that have been implemented in the past year have been implemented together with our partners whether it be sharing staffing resources, pulling together to respond to an RFP for services or for a grant of funds, or as previously noted, designing and implementing a centralized intake process.

The third pillar of our strategic Plan is Employer of Choice: This pillar is focused on empowering staff, and encouraging a spirit of collaborative input, to co-create solutions and foster a sense of shared responsibility for the agency and its work. We have seen this as the team works together to co-create wellness initiatives during the pandemic.

Financial Stability underpins the Strategic plan. With a long-term view towards maintaining financial stability, this pillar is focused on implementing new initiatives to support services that are not fully funded, and continued development of partnerships. All initiatives implemented to support the strategic plan will be made the view of maintenance of financial stability.

Thank-you to all Board members for your support and engagement on the development of the strategic plan as well as all your support over the past year.

We are very thankful for the resilience demonstrated by the Leadership and staff of KWC. This has been a very difficult year as you all transitioned from in person service at our Charles street location to inviting our clients virtually into your homes. I am continuously amazed by not only the support you provide your clients and the care and importance you place on the value of your work but on the support that you provide one another. In a year when many of you have not only been therapists but also part-time teachers, caregivers and IT specialists all within the walls of your own home, the need has been great and the support you have provided to one another invaluable. Thank-you for your demonstrated ability to adapt, support, challenge, and work together over the past year.

We are very thankful to our funders who have supported us quite generously over the past year. Thank-you to all our funders for your continued support in the work that we do within the Region of Waterloo – we could not do this without you.

As we look towards the future, I am confident that KW Counselling has a strong team in place to continue towards the achievement of our Strategic Plan with the support of our Board, Leadership team, staff, and funders. I am very proud of the Agency and the efforts that you have all put forth over the past year to support our community in a period of crisis and am honoured to have been a part of that effort.

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

Once upon a time...

... in 1950, an organization called the KW Federated Charities generously granted \$6,500 to an organization called the KW Family Services Bureau.

I wonder about the story behind that first grant. About the worry and labour and the meetings. How many cups of tea and coffee went into that grant? How many letters and signatures? How many volunteer hours and doors knocked on to raise awareness and support? I wonder about the humans from both organizations who made it possible, who saw the need in the community, shared a vision, and felt the pressure to act. About the elation they would have felt on receiving the news that it was successful, and, in direct proportion, the sense of responsibility.

To give a sense of perspective, in 1950 a brand new car would cost about \$1,500. For the princely sum of \$6,500, the KW Family Services Bureau was able to help 1200 people in that first year. Interestingly, clients in that first year identified the lack of affordable housing as one of the significant stressors for families. KW Family Services Bureau eventually became KW

Vision: *A community where no one is left behind, a community where positive relationships are valued as our highest achievement.*

Mission: *KW Counselling Services provides excellence in counselling, public education, and training. We engage with our community at the individual, family and systems level, promoting positive changes that will lead to fulfilled and productive lives.*



**70th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Held May 25, 2021
KW Counselling Services**

Counselling Services. And the KW Federated Charities, the organization which made that original investment, has since become United Way Waterloo Region Communities. We are still working together. Much has changed. Some things, not so much.

In the seventy year history of this organization, I am its fourth executive director. I am standing on the shoulders of people who have, and who continue, to moved mountains to make this organization what it is. It is a very special place. A place which values relationships. A place which recognizes the power of belonging. A place that is listening closely to the community it serves, and shifts to respond to changing needs. In 2020, those shifts were substantial. Even talking about KW Counselling as a place is different. Because we really mean our beautiful building, yes, but also the walk-in closets and laundry rooms and couches and dining room tables where the work of our organization took place, with pets and children and family members, and the weird contradictory experiences of this year which was both strangely intimate but also forcibly distant, as we all found our way through an experience that has both been in one sense shared on a global scale, but has also been highly personal based on individual circumstances.

And so I want to express my thanks. To the staff who kept re-inventing your daily work in order for us to be there for our community while also going through the pandemic yourselves, please know you have my gratitude and admiration, always. To the funders who signalled that this year was not going to be typical and who provided flexibility and support to allow us to do what was needed, please know that that flexibility made all the difference in our capability to adapt. And to our community, who continues to hold faith with us and support our vision of a community where no one is left behind, please know that none of this is possible without you.

10. Adjournment of Meeting – Elaine Read

Motion: I move that the 70th Annual General Meeting be adjourned. Moved by Kristine Schmeiss.
Motion carried by a show of hands.

11. Volunteer of the Year Award – Kristine Schmeiss

Presented to Naideen Bailey

Naideen has been a volunteer with us since 2017. She has been attending community fairs in the Region of Waterloo representing KW Counselling Services. She often took the display and banner and pamphlets to events and answered questions about our services. When the pandemic hit, we reached out to Naideen as she was a (then) retired Public Health Nurse with a long history in infection control work. She answered all of our questions about COVID-19, joined Joint Health and Safety committee meetings, reviewed our policies and provided feedback, and shared reliable evidence-based resources at a time where we were learning more every week.

All of this while at the same time, she “un-retired” to support our community and specifically Long Term Care and retirement homes. The relief that her calm approach, clear responses, and expert advice provided for staff has been palpable. Everything was easier because of her involvement. Thank you Naideen!

Vision: *A community where no one is left behind, a community where positive relationships are valued as our highest achievement.*

Mission: *KW Counselling Services provides excellence in counselling, public education, and training. We engage with our community at the individual, family and systems level, promoting positive changes that will lead to fulfilled and productive lives.*

12. Guest Speaker –Jim Moss

Jim spoke about mental wellness in the workplace and also mental health coming out of the pandemic and the expectation that the demands for mental health supports will increase greatly.

13. Closing Remarks – Elaine Read

Thanks so much to everyone who joined us today. I'm going to ask all of our board members to join in the next zoom meeting so we can have a short board meeting.

New Director Bio

Soha Masri is an Ontario licensed lawyer and has a Master's degree in Business Administration (MBA). Her practice is focused primarily on corporate and commercial transactions; throughout her years of experience between North America, the Middle East and the Arabian Gulf countries, she handled reviewing and drafting legal documents such as joint ventures, software licensing, SaaS (software-as-a-service), distribution agreements, direct sale agreements for hardware, software (ERP), non-disclosure agreements, Intellectual Property and various other IT-related contracts. Currently, Soha is in-house legal counsel with MindBeacon Software Inc. handling corporate commercial contracts and transactions, in addition to starting her own law office in Waterloo. Her goal is to inspire young women to challenge the perceived barrier to success and see that anything is possible. She is an entrepreneur passionate about inclusion and gender equality, straight-talking and continuous learning. Soha is a member of the Coalition of Muslim Women, a member of the K-W Women Empowerment group, and is an Active member of Claire Hills Community. Previously, she volunteered with the International Labour Organization (ILO) as a legal researcher covering child labour in the Middle East. She was a Field researcher with the World Health Organization (WHO) on a project concerning mental health issues post-civil war. She is a mother of two, a six-year-old boy and nine year-old girl. She loves nature and extended hiking trips.

Vision: *A community where no one is left behind, a community where positive relationships are valued as our highest achievement.*

Mission: *KW Counselling Services provides excellence in counselling, public education, and training. We engage with our community at the individual, family and systems level, promoting positive changes that will lead to fulfilled and productive lives.*

Melanie Van Alphen graduated from Wilfrid Laurier University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology. As a mother of three children, she is passionate about inclusive education and supporting various initiatives across Waterloo Region that promote a community and environment where all people feel welcome, safe and valued. This passion led Melanie to run for the position of School Board Trustee for the Waterloo Catholic District School Board where she was elected in 2014 and is currently the Vice-Chair representing Waterloo, Woolwich, and Wellesley. Melanie has experience as a Strong Start volunteer in an elementary school, as treasurer and member of school council, and co-chair of the annual school fundraiser event. She has also coached soccer for the Woolwich Youth Soccer Club. Spending quality time with her family is important to Melanie, often enjoying nature walks, reading, game nights and much more as they cherish special moments together.

Jennifer Sandison currently works as a paralegal in Risk Management Services at Frank Cowan Company. Her work includes reviewing contracts, researching current legislation and claims, writing articles and doing seminars about risk management concerns. Previously, Jennifer had her own business as a paralegal where she represented clients in Small Claims Court. Jennifer has also worked as a law clerk/legal secretary for several different lawyers. Jennifer currently volunteers as a Director for a non-profit corporation her family started in memory of her son. In the past, she has volunteered for school council as Treasurer and for her local minor hockey association as Secretary. Jennifer's family enjoys attending concerts and comedy shows. They also enjoy hiking and biking together.

Ilidia Sa Melo has been working in the public sector for more than 30 years, including holding positions with the Clerk's Offices at the Region of Waterloo and City of Cambridge. Ilidia currently works in the Records Management Program at the Township of Woolwich, a position which gives her time to support many charities in Waterloo Region, including Zonta International, Argus House, Cambridge Self Help Food bank, Haven House, the Cambridge Humane Society and the YWCA. Ilidia has also been involved in supporting Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region, representing the City of Cambridge at fundraisers. Ilidia and her husband Victor have been married for 27 years and have two adult children. They enjoy travelling, golfing, working out, camping and spending time with their dog Zoe.

Colleen Heinrichs is a senior finance and risk executive in the insurance industry with over 16 years of experience in risk management, finance, accounting, insurance regulation, and compliance. She has experience implementing risk management programs, serving as chief contact for regulators, ensuring regulatory compliance, strengthening corporate governance for boards, and partnering with senior leadership to monitor company financials and budgets. Colleen graduated from McGill University with a Bachelor of Science in 1998. She started her career with KPMG Canada in Toronto and achieved her designation as a Chartered Accountant in 2003. Colleen is member and Co-Chair of her local school parent council and is a parent volunteer with a local swim club. In the past she has coached local youth soccer and acted as treasurer for a non-profit group. Colleen enjoys playing tennis and being a parent to two competitive swimmers.

Vision: *A community where no one is left behind, a community where positive relationships are valued as our highest achievement.*

Mission: *KW Counselling Services provides excellence in counselling, public education, and training. We engage with our community at the individual, family and systems level, promoting positive changes that will lead to fulfilled and productive lives.*