

Autism Connections Fredericton

Annual General Meeting

Fiscal Years

July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020

Date: Nov 25, 2020

Location: By Zoom

1. Call to order: 7:05 pm.
2. Proof of Quorum: 21 in attendance – Quorum is 16.

Approval of Minutes of November 26th, 2018 : **Motion to approve:**
Liz McDonnell/Mike Elliott.

4. Approval of Agenda: **Motion to approve.** *Kim MacKeigan/Ginette*
5. Chair's Report & questions from the floor: Paul McDonnell

Introduction of Board of Directors: Paul McDonnell, Chair; Kim MacKeigan, Vice Chair; Trisha Fournier-Hoyt, Treasurer; Ginette Hannan, Secretary

Members at large: Liz McDonnell; Barbara d'Entremont; Greg Forsythe; Monique Lavigne; Judy McKinney; Michael Elliott; Amberee Hardy; Katie LaCosta, and Samantha Landry.

Introduction of Executive Director: Rick Hutchins

A very heartfelt thank you goes out to Rick for his last four years of exceptional service, which has transformed the Centre in many ways. He has seen the value of partnerships with other agencies that allow us to leverage more sophisticated programming. Some of the partnerships include:

- UNB's Dr. Michael Palmer to bring students in his Applied Behaviour Analysis course to the autism centre to teach skills or to do academic tutoring.
- Renaissance College (Arts 3000 and 4000 class projects).
- STU Social Work school
- Community Colleges – We provide students with practicum experiences while they provide us with services.

- Autism Nova Scotia to bring the federal government's *Ready, Willing and Able*, a job finding program, to AFC. We also partner with them to provide a special program for young adults on human relationships and sexuality.
- Opal Respite Care (summer camp)

Prior to the arrival of Rick as Executive Director in March 2017, we had a surplus of space and were thinking of moving to a smaller, less expensive, location. Today we have filled every square inch and can use more space.

ACF Future Goals will be to continue to work on developing a plan for sustainability and self-sufficiency with stable funding. We have developed a strategic plan that will help us move closer to that goal. That would include achieving the means to employ some additional staff on a full-time basis as we are presently in need of an Office Manager and a Director of Programming.

Granting Agencies: ACF is very grateful to the granting agencies that have supported us in the past two years, specifically the Windsor Foundation (\$42,000), which has helped us to further refine and develop our Autism Resource Manual and to upgrade our library resources. We have had excellent support over the years from The Fredericton Community Foundation, and most recently they supported our *Art is a Spectrum* program as well as our summer day camp (Camp Marvel), which also received funding from the NB Children's Fund.

We have hosted two major fundraisers (Superhero Walk & Fun Run and the Spares & Strikes Bowl-a-Thon), which have been very successful in spite of the pandemic. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the many wonderful people who have contributed to ACF through these events.

Working with Governments: In the past two years, we have pursued opportunities to encourage our provincial government to be more involved and innovative in autism services. Our main initiative was the provincial tour we conducted to obtain first-hand accounts of service needs to families, for adults on the spectrum, and for service providers. The main findings focused on the needs for housing, employment, access to mental health service, and aids to navigation through complex service options. A report was prepared and submitted to the government, and subsequently made public. A copy is available on our website.

We look forward to continuing our efforts toward achieving self-sufficiency and developing services and programs to meet the practical needs of the autism community to a greater extent.

There were no questions asked.

Motion that the President's Report be accepted as presented:

Kim MacKeigan/Amberee Hardy. Carried

6. Report of the Treasurer: Trisha Fournier-Hoyt

Motion to re-appoint Walter Logue, CPA, to compile statement to June 30, 2021: Trisha Fournier-Hoyt / Barbara D'Entremont. Carried.

We've had a very successful year with our revenues being \$213,296. The amount of programming was our best year on record, hugely due to Rick's work. Our highest expenditure is rent. Most salaries were covered by grants. We have a surplus of \$1,050, and that is in spite of Covid challenges.

Revenues	\$213,296
Expenditures	\$212,246
Excess of revenues over expenditures	\$1,050
Net Assets, beginning of year	\$14,486
Net Assets, end of year	\$15,536

Motion to approve treasurer's report as presented: Ginette Hannan / Katie LaCosta Carried.

7. Executive Director's Report

Rick announced that he will be retiring next September and it's time to start preparing for secession. He then presented a slide show, highlighting the following accomplishments:

- New Outdoor Play Area: We acquired a new outdoor play area thanks to a grant. A swing set was also obtained through Kijiji. This is a huge addition that was especially welcomed during summer camp. At the time, local parks were closed because of COVID-19.
- New Resource Guide: Our new Resource Guide is complete and ready to be launched. It is much easier to navigate and it now includes searchable links. This is the only guide east of Ontario that is searchable. It will be added to the website. It will also have a QR code which will be advertised everywhere, including schools, doctors' offices etc. We welcome other additions to the guide.
- New website: Our website is being redesigned and is due to be launched next month. It will be more interactive and user friendly.
- Windsor Grant: We have received \$42,000 from the Windsor Foundation to be used on the Resource Guide and to upgrade our library.
- Library: The library will be digitized and will also be searchable from our website. Part of the grant will be used to purchase new books and e-books.
- Camp Marvel: We were very fortunate to have been able to have camp this summer during COVID, and it was a huge success. We had 6 weeks of camps

with one-on-one staff/camper ratio. Activities ranged from tie-dyeing to sprinkler play to slime making. We are discussing the possibility of having an adult camp next year, and possibly a March Break camp as well.

- UNB Skills program. This is a partnership with the University of New Brunswick's Applied Behaviour Analysis program. It involves student interns working one-on-one with autistic children, youth and adults. Our centre is a place for them to do their practicum from September to May. There are 12 adults in the program. This increases the use of our facilities during the day and also some evenings. The tutoring program is gearing up for more participation in January 2021.
- Parent Support Group – This program, led by Katie Hammell is back up and running. It is now offered online during Covid, and is going very well. Their first topic was on New Diagnosis. The group will meet once a month, virtually, to discuss different topics and listen to guest speakers.
- Supports for Adults: Louise Tardif still leads the Chat and Chill program for adults on the spectrum. Amberlee has also created two events: *Mental Health on the Spectrum* and *Transgender Day of Remembrance*. We are always looking to add more ways to support our adults on the spectrum such as the Speaker Series, and by adding new resource materials to our library.
- COVID-19 Protocol. We are following the protocols. Many staff members are working from home. It has been challenging but we have been able to survive and even thrive during the pandemic. The centre has been closed to the public since March other than for Camp Marvel and other small programs. We have been very creative.
- Healthy Relationships, Sexuality and Autism Course: We have partnered with Autism Nova Scotia to offer their Healthy Relationships, Sexuality and Autism (HRSA) course. The program is open to all New Brunswick adults on the spectrum age 19+. ABA student, Rebecca, is teaching the course through zoom. The course will be starting November 24th and go for 12 weeks.
- Ready Willing and Able: This is a partnership with Autism Nova Scotia, which provides employment supports for adults on the spectrum. They provide job coaching and skill building.
- Virtual Superhero Fun Run/Walk 2020: This year we had to create a virtual event. Students Makenna and Olivia organized the event, incorporating lots of creative elements such as photo competitions, live performances, and encouraged participants to get creative by swimming/biking/paddling their "walk". It was very successful and raised \$15,000.
- Spares & Strikes for Autism 2020: This event organized by student Sheehan was also a creative Covid-safe fundraiser that raised \$22,200.
- Looking forward: – 2020/21 promises to be a big year for ACF as we develop our projects and build greater sustainability with funding and support. The strategic plan will be completed in the New Year and will guide the Centre for the next two years. Succession will be key to keeping the momentum and a thriving Centre. COVID may continue to affect our abilities to provide direct programming, but the transfer to digital services will help.

Motion to accept Executive Director's report: Liz McDonnell/Monique Lavigne.
Carried.

8. Confirmation of new board members.

Motion by Kim to confirm the following new members to the Board.

Michael Elliott	Kim MacKeigan/Judy McKinney
Amberee Hardy	Kim MacKeigan/Katie LaCosta
Katie LaCosta	Kim MacKeigan / Judy McKinney
Samantha Landry	Kim MacKeigan / Greg Forsythe

Motion carried.

9. Adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Ginette Hannan
Secretary