



## ***Board of Directors' Meeting***

### **MINUTES**

**Wednesday, September 15, 2021**

**4:30 p.m.**

**In Person – Inn on the Bay/Best Western**

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**Present:** Linda Van Sligtenhorst (Chair), Christine John, Susanne Snowdon, Chris Wren, Renee Schlonies, Marsha Reany, Selwyn (Buck) Hicks and Alison Fernandes (via phone)

**Staff:** Phyllis Lovell, Anne Bester, Kelly Ferris, Julie Lipsett, Deb Pope, Jeff Nickel and Robin Wallis (CUPE)

**Guests:** Nancy Craig, Foster Parent Association and Darlene Ritchie (Chippewas of Nawash Representative)

**Regrets:** Marie Tudor, Andrew Marttinen and Tim Nicol

**Recorder:** Kim Fleming

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**1. Welcome / Opening Remarks**

Linda Van Sligtenhorst welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. Approval of the Agenda / Conflict of Interest Declaration**

*BE IT RESOLVED*

*THAT the Board accepts the agenda as presented.*

*MOVED by Susanne Snowdon; SECONDED by Chris Wren*

*CARRIED*

No conflict of interest declared.

**3. Approval of the Minutes from June 16<sup>th</sup> and July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 & Business Arising**

*BE IT RESOLVED*

*THAT the Board accepts the minutes from June 16, 2021 meeting as presented.*

*MOVED by Selwyn Hicks; SECONDED by Christine John*

*CARRIED*

*BE IT RESOLVED*

*THAT the Board accepts the minutes from July 22, 2021 meeting as presented.*

*MOVED by Renee Schlonies; SECONDED by Selwyn Hicks*

*CARRIED*

**4. Presentation – National Truth and Reconciliation Day – Presentation of Residential School by Christine John, Past Chair**

Christine John began her presentation with the Traditional Land Acknowledgement.

A high-level overview was presented to the Board sharing the timelines of the residential school system in Canada with the hope that it will be the beginning of a learning journey for everyone. It has only been since the 1990's that the facts about residential schools started to surface.

In 1755, the Indian Department was created in an effort to establish and maintain relationships with Indigenous peoples. Missionary schools were the precursors to the Government of Canada's residential school system. These schools were run by religious orders and in 1820, there were two locations opened (one in Manitoba and one in Brantford Ontario).

The goals of the Residential schools were to teach Indigenous people to read English so they could read the bible and to convert Indigenous people to Christianity.

In 1885, it was deemed that Residential schools were necessary to remove children from the influence of their home and that was the only way of advancing the Indian to civilization. It was in 1892 that regulations were passed giving control over daily school administration to the Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian and Methodist churches.

Between 1890 and the 1950's, Indigenous parents had no choice but to send their children to a residential school as all Indigenous people were wards of the state and 'Indian Affairs' (white man) recruited students and ensured Indigenous students went to school.

Over the entire life of the residential school system, there were a total of about 139 schools in every territory and province except Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick. The last school closed in 1996. Upon the closing of the last residential school in Canada, a 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples recommended an investigation into the violence and abuses at residential schools, and this gained national attention.

**5. Reports**

• **Chair**

In August, Linda Van Sligtenhorst contacted board members to confirm board committee assignments including committee chairs.

In August, Linda Van Sligtenhorst, Phyllis Lovell and Renee Schlonies participated in two interviews with two potential board candidates. Both interviews went very well, and the Governance Committee will recommend that both candidates be welcomed on the board.

On September 9<sup>th</sup>, the first meeting was held with Patrick Rowan from Feldman Daxon Partners and the Ad Hoc Executive Recruitment Committee. The agenda included information on the process and the next steps. At the September 8<sup>th</sup> Governance Committee meeting, a question was raised on whether Ms. Lovell, as current CEO, would be participating in these meetings. Ms. Van Sligtenhorst was able to have a conversation with Patrick Rowan about this ask and a decision was made that Ms. Lovell would not join the Ad Hoc Recruitment Committee meetings but would meet with Mr. Rowan to answer questions and would also be kept in the loop with next steps.

During the meeting, Sidney Nadjiwon, Councillor from Chippewas of Nawash announced that he will be stepping down from the Committee as he has other demands on him at this time and recommended that Beverley Nadjiwon represent Chippewas of Nawash in his position as Councilor.

Patrick Rowan shared a ‘draft’ job posting for review and approval. The job posting deadline will be October 18<sup>th</sup> and in November, a list of potential candidates will be shared with the committee and interviews will be scheduled. A survey monkey will be sent out to the ad hoc committee and all have been asked to share the survey with those they believe can contribute and offer feedback. Mr. Rowan is following the timelines that were provided to him and our hope is to have a new CEO in place by January 2021.

Board survey evaluation results were reviewed and discussed at the last Governance Committee meeting and the surveys indicated that there were one or two board members not satisfied with some of the board processes. Ms. Van Sligtenhorst invited board members to contact her privately if they would like to discuss any issues they were not satisfied with.

- **OACAS**

Sam Curtin, Program Supervisor from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services shared a video providing greetings and introducing himself to the Board.

- **FPA**

Nancy Craig presented on her report. The Foster Parent Association (FPA) continues to meet regularly using a virtual platform. Foster Parents would like to return to having face to face meetings as virtual meetings come with their share of challenges. The meetings continue to be on the third Tuesday of each month and Nancy will extend an invitation to Linda as the new Chair of the Board.

Ms. Craig shared with the Board the biggest concern that foster parents are currently dealing with is the double standard of mask wearing. Ms. Craig described to the Board that when workers come into the home, they wear a mask, and the foster parent wears a mask. If foster parents do not wear a mask, the worker will wear both a mask and face shield. This has been

the standard for the organization. The concern is when sending children for visits with their bio families and the children are not wearing a face mask and either is their parent/s. This is a worry and Ms. Craig asked if there was a way to enforce that masks be worn.

Ms. Lovell spoke to the board about the sector and the organization's next steps in tackling proof of vaccination that will begin on September 22 and what that will mean for volunteers, caregiving families and first families. The expectations with BGCFS staff are from a Health and Safety consideration following the recommendations of Public Health. We will need to think through what our continued approach will be as a mandatory service. Ms. Lovell hopes that the Board will have confidence that we are tackling this issue and will bring it back to next month's meeting with a much more thorough understanding of what our approach will be.

- **Saugeen First Nation Representative**

No report provided. Ms. Van Sligtenhorst shared the letter received from Theresa Root, Representative of Saugeen First Nation, that indicated her wish to resign from the board. Ms. Root was planning to recommend someone from the Nation to replace her as Nation Rep to the Board.

- **Chippewas of Nawash Representative**

Darlene Ritchie presented on her report.

Beginning on June 7<sup>th</sup> Nawash has gone through a transformation with child welfare. This is exciting times as they continue to build a community-based approach for child protection. There has been a lot of work done so far working with other organizations around developing protocols and now waiting for council to make some important decisions. The Nation is looking at creating a vision and a place where children are well cared for emotionally, physically and spiritually. Lots of work has been done with the sharing of culture and stories. There have been lots of trauma from the older generation affected by residential schools and the work needs to continue to meet people where they are and work together moving forward. Our children are our future. Nawash will work to ensure that children are being cared for. There has been training offered and Signs of Safety is the best approach when working with families.

- **Chief Executive Officer**

Phyllis Lovell presented on her report.

September 29<sup>th</sup> is National Truth and Reconciliation Day. Bruce Grey Child and Family Services has an active Truth and Reconciliation Committee who have been working on a number of initiatives. The Committee is populated by a group of staff across the organization from all areas of service who are committed to the people and spirit of reconciliation. To mark this year, the committee have organized a book reading of an Indigenous children's book called 'Jiggin for Halibut with Tsinii'. This book is geared to children between the ages of 6 and 8 and is also a book that adults may enjoy. The book reading is scheduled for Wednesday, September

29<sup>th</sup> at 11 a.m. by the author Sara Florence Davidson. It has been the work of the committee to collect the stories from the Indigenous people that we serve. At our last staff meeting, we invited a father from the Nation to share his personal story with our staff. His story really had a profound impact on all who attended that meeting. Ms. Lovell shared with the Board how she appreciated the small working group and the families who were willing to share their stories with other child welfare organizations as our attention is to learn and connect with families in a way that is helpful and to allow them to move forward.

M'Wikwedong Indigenous Friendship Centre at 1045 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue East, Owen Sound (old Dufferin school) is hosting a sacred fire ceremony honouring National Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day on September 30<sup>th</sup> from 1 to 3 p.m.

Linda Van Sligtenhorst and Phyllis Lovell on behalf of the Board welcomed the new Chief of Chippewas of Nawash, Veronica Smith. Chief Smith worked for Native Child Welfare and legacy Grey Children's Aid Society many years ago. Chief Smith comes to her role as Chief with a strong orientation of restoration of jurisdiction and this is a positive step forward for the Nation. A letter was also sent to former Chief Nadjiwon to thank him for his leadership to the community. Ms. Lovell is so grateful for the leadership he provided around the housing and the partnership the Nation had had with Habitat for Humanity. To honour and thank Chief Nadjiwon, BGCFS made a donation in his name to Habitat for Humanity.

Ms. Lovell invited board members to volunteer for the new builds on the Nations. It was wonderful to have board members come out and help at previous builds and all are welcome to continue to volunteer.

Ms. Lovell reminded the board that this is our first face to face meeting since the beginning of the pandemic. It is wonderful to be able to share a meal together and come together for a board meeting in one room. Ms. Lovell asked the board members to think about future meetings and whether they would like to continue with face-to-face meetings or to return to a digital platform for all board meetings. In the past, the board met in Chesley at the Bluewater Board of Education Office. As of September 22<sup>nd</sup>, all who enter the Board of Education office will be required to show proof of vaccinations.

Ms. Lovell shared with the board, information on an upcoming book launch on Sunday, September 19<sup>th</sup> at Harrison Park Picnic Shelter. The name of the book is 'A Place to Belong' and it contains stories from Newcomers to Grey-Bruce and is a collection of stories. A couple of BGCFS staff were recognized in the book and we are feeling very proud of them. Ms. Lovell invited board members to attend this book launch at Harrison Park and encouraged people to purchase a copy of the book from the Ginger Press Bookstore in Owen Sound.

- **Community, Governance and Stakeholder Relations Committee**

Renee Schlonies presented on her report.

The Governance Committee reviewed polices and the Committee's Terms of Reference and Workplan for the year.

The Committee heard about the two applicants to the Board and recommended that Chief Craig Ambrose and Brittany Andor be elected to the Board. Chief Ambrose was also invited as a community member to sit on the Ad Hoc Executive Recruitment Committee.

*BE IT RESOLVED*

*THAT the Board accepts the CGSR Committee report and all motions contained in the report.*

*MOVED by Renee Schlonies; SECONDED by Christine John*

*CARRIED*

- **Finance, Risk Management and Audit Committee**

Linda Van Sligtenhorst reported on the September 8<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The approved budget allocation for 2021-2022 is \$19,491,463. The budget allocation was equal to the planning amount provided with the 20-21 allocation. BGCFS was entitled to an additional \$255,000 according to the funding formula; however, funding is capped at a 2% increase that was already built into the planning amount.

Targeted subsidies continue to be funded at 25% of costs and will be reconciled at year end.

Supporting Consistency of Care for Youth who turned 21 is funded at \$425/month per youth (50% of prior year).

New funding was received this year effective:

- April 1, 2021; one-time financial assistance funding for customary care in the amount of \$6,000/youth for setup of the placement (e.g., furniture, etc.)
- October 1, 2021; one-time financial assistance for kinship service startup costs in the amount of \$1,000 annually/youth for episodic expenditures.
- October 1, 2021; funding for standard subsidies for adoption and legal custody agreements for children under the age of 7 in the amount of \$475/month providing the family meets the financial threshold

As of June 30, 2021, we had a surplus of \$565,377. We continue to be underspent with travel and we are monitoring this as the pandemic continues. Other expenditures such as technology are under budget due to timing of expenditures. Our boarding rates are under budget, but we are anticipating this to change, and we will continue to monitor this expenditure.

Mr. Nickel shared with the Committee that currently we are in a good financial situation.

The balance sheet shows 3.2 million dollars. Our cash flow is 3,402,249 in the bank.

Mr. Nickel presented on the Adult Protection Services (APS) Year to Date. The APS program is our second biggest program and indicates a balanced budget at year end. The funding for APS has been the same over the past few years.

For the period of January 1, 2021 to July 8, 2021, we were required to remit \$1,803,464.85. We have received statement of accounts from CRA showing that we have paid them \$1,803,464.85 for the same period.

The Committee reviewed the Terms of Reference for 'Grounding Human Resources into our Strategic Plan'. Ms. Lovell shared with the Committee that it would be important for the new hired CEO to be included in this process and advised that we should not begin the work in September as originally planned but wait for the new CEO to be hired. A facilitator will be hired to lead the process and Ms. Lovell will do some research to ensure they have a background in employment issues. The plan will be to have the facilitator in place by the time the new CEO is hired.

It is important to continue to have a strong commitment to the strategic plan and to honour diversity. It is important to promote a diverse workforce in all levels of recruitment. Ms. Lovell will revise the terms of reference and will bring back to the next meeting for review and approval.

Kelly Ferris spoke about the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies' Benefits Consortium Participation and Commitment Agreement. The program is designed to assist agencies in lowering expenses through group volume purchasing, enhance plan design features through a group plan, provide vendor management and advocacy within benefit plans and allow benchmark support and education capabilities for collective bargaining.

Ms. Ferris shared with the Board that BGCFS has always been a member of the consortium but there was never a formal agreement in place. This is before the Board for BGCFS to formalize our participation in the Benefits Consortium.

Jeff Nickel shared with the Committee that BGCFS had a snow removal contract last year through Northern Supply Chain where we landed on a one-year contract and one year renewal with a snow removal company. Mr. Nickel received notice that the company has decided to get out of the snow removal business and Northern Supply Chain asked if we would be interested in a 2-year contract with another company. Board approval is required to proceed with this 2-year contract through Northern Supply Chain.

*BE IT RESOLVED*

*THAT the Board accepts the FRMA Committee report and all motions contained in the report.*

*MOVED by Selwyn Hicks; SECONDED by Alison Fernandes*

*CARRIED*

6. **New Business**

No new business.

7. **In-Camera (required)**

The Board moved in camera at 7:06 p.m. to approve in-camera minutes from June 16, 2021 meeting and to receive a briefing on a young service user.

*BE IT RESOLVED*

*THAT the Board of Directors meeting moves in-camera at 7:06 p.m. to approve in-camera minutes from June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021 meeting and to receive a briefing on a young service user.*

*MOVED by Christine John; SECONDED by Chris Wren*

*CARRIED*

**BE IT RESOLVED**

THAT the Board of Directors meeting move out of camera at 7:35 p.m.

*MOVED by Susanne Snowdon; SECONDED by Chris Wren*

*CARRIED*

8. Next Meeting – Wednesday, October 20, 2021

9. Adjournment

*BE IT RESOLVED*

*THAT the Board of Directors meeting be adjourned.*

*MOVED by Linda Van Sligtenhorst*