



Huronia Transition Homes

... working to end all violence against all women

ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017



...Working to end all violence against all women

...travailler pour mettre fin à la violence contre toutes les femmes



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OUR MISSION:

We believe that all violence against all women and children must end. We are community members who are committed to education and advocacy as a means to end violence. We are also committed to providing shelter and support to abused women and their children and to provide counselling to women survivors of sexual assault.

BELIEFS AND AIMS:

Huron Transition Homes exists to serve women and children dealing with violence and abuse. We are here only to serve those women and children. Our understanding and analysis of violence and our role in ending it is based and framed by this belief.

Violence against women is a global social reality. It is used to control women and is a symptom of women's ongoing inequality.

Violence against women is a human rights issue. Perpetrators– both individual and systemic– must be held accountable for the violence they engage in, whether explicitly or implicitly. At the same time, women's response to the violence they experience should not be criminalized or pathologized.

All of us are responsible for working to end violence against women and children so that all women will have the right and freedom to live and act as they choose.

We use an intersectional feminist framework (IFF). This framework attempts to understand how multiple forces work together and interact to reinforce conditions of inequality and social exclusion. An IFF examines how factors including socio-economic status, race, class, gender, sexualities, health, ability, geographic location, refugee and immigrant status combine with broader historical and current systems of discrimination such as colonialism and globalization to simultaneously determine inequalities among individuals and groups.

It supports our work to reduce barriers to major social systems faced by many women.

We bring a harm reduction philosophy to our work. This means we meet people where they are at with compassion, understanding and knowledge, providing support and resources foster connection.

...cont'd

BELIEFS AND AIMS ...cont'd

We make every attempt to understand and respect women's diverse life experiences and the impact of violence on their lives.

While we understand the primary mandate is the provision of direct services to women and children, we locate that work in the broader context of the community, provincial, national and international movement to eradicate violence against women and children.

Where their philosophies, beliefs and aims are compatible with ours, we belong to, work with and support relevant provincial, national and international groups and associations.

We understand that some women face greater challenges and more barriers because of their lived realities, and we work to make our properties and services as accessible as possible to all women as well as to educate ourselves and our community about issues of oppression, discrimination and accessibility.

Based on these beliefs and aims, how we do our work is constantly evolving as we understand more about the needs of women and children we serve.

HURONIA TRANSITION HOMES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2016-2017

Chairperson

Heather Henderson

Vice-Chair

Jacquie Skinner

Secretary/ Treasurer

Annabelle Groves

Members At Large

Barbara Ann Chidiac
Elke Bews
Samantha Docherty
Lorraine Hebner
Alice Louise Stafford-Golisky
Jessica Connell

Executive Director

Kathy Willis

Huron Transition Homes Annual General Meeting For 2015/2016

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held June 20, 2016 at North Simcoe Sports and Rec Centre, 527 Len Self Blvd., Midland, Ontario, at 5:30 p.m.

Meeting called to order at 5:40 p.m. by Margaret Robertson

Members: Margaret Robertson, Annabelle Groves, Jacquie Skinner, Heather Henderson, Barbara Ann Chidiac, Elke Bews, Lorraine Hebner, Samantha Docherty and Kathy Willis (Executive Director)

Auditors: James Whittier CA; Liz Schandlen CGA

Guests: Debra Bellamy (Ministry of the Attorney General; Louise Stafford (Operation Grow Working Group) Jane Little (Director of Operations); Sarah Hull (Program Supervisor, La Maison Rosewood Shelter); Annick Brown (Program Supervisor, French Language Services); Pat Wolstenholme (Program Supervisor, Athena's Sexual Assault Counselling & Advocacy); Jane Skerritt; Helen Higgins;

Absent: Thea Jones (resulting from technological difficulties)

Recorder of Minutes: Germaine Lesperance

1. Welcome
The Chairperson called the meeting to order and welcomed guests. Kathy introduced Debra Bellamy, Regional Program Consultant (Ministry of the Attorney General).
2. Quorum
Quorum was established.
3. Approval of Agenda

<i>Moved by:</i>	<i>Jacquie Skinner</i>
<i>Seconded by:</i>	<i>Annabelle Groves</i>

*To accept the agenda as presented. **Carried***
4. Approval of June 23, 2015 AGM Minutes

Margaret Robertson referred to the June 23, 2015 Annual General Meeting Minutes and requested that they be adopted as presented.

Moved by: Elke Bews
Seconded by: Heather Henderson

*To accept the minutes of the June 23, 2015 Annual General Meeting as presented. **Carried.***

5. Chairperson's Report

Margaret Robertson presented the Chairperson's annual report.

Moved by: Margaret Robertson
Seconded by: Heather Henderson

*To accept the Chairperson's report as written in the Annual Report. **Carried***

6. Treasurer's Report

Annabelle presented the Treasurer's annual report.

Moved by: Annabelle Groves
Seconded by: Jacquie Skinner

*To accept the Treasurer's report as written in the Annual Report. **Carried***

Annabelle introduced Jim Whittier, who presented the audited financial statements for the 2015/2016 year.

Annabelle referred to the audited Financial Statements of the 2015/2016 year for the following motions:

Moved by: Annabelle Groves
Seconded by: Heather Henderson

*To accept the Audited Financial Statements for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2016 as presented. **Carried.***

Moved by: Annabelle Groves
Seconded by: Elke Bews

*That James Whittier Chartered Accountant be appointed as Auditor for Huronia Transition Homes for the fiscal year 2016/2017. **Carried***

7. Pet-Friendly Working Group Report

Barbara Ann presented the Pet-Friendly Working Group annual report.

*Moved by: Barbara Ann Chidiac
Seconded by: Annabelle Groves*

*To accept the Pet-Friendly Working Group report as written in the Annual Report. **Carried***

8. Executive Director's Report

Kathy Willis submitted the Executive Director's Annual Report for approval.

*Moved by: Heather Henderson
Seconded by: Annabelle Groves*

*To accept the Executive Director's report as amended in the Annual Report. **Carried***

9. Director of Operations' Report

Jane Little presented the Director of Operations' annual report.

*Moved by: Jacquie Skinner
Seconded by: Samantha Docherty*

*To accept the Director of Operations' report as written in the Annual Report. **Carried***

10. Nominating Committee Report

Jacquie Skinner presented the slate of candidates for re-election: Annabelle Groves and Barbara Ann Chidiac.

10.1 Call for Nominations

There was no call for nominations as no Board member has exhausted their term of service. Therefore, no vacancies currently exist on the Board of Directors this year.

10.2 Elections

*Moved by: Jacquie Skinner
Seconded by: Heather Henderson*

That the following candidates are acclaimed to the Board of Directors; Annabelle Groves and Barbara Ann Chidiac. **Carried**

11. New Business

There is no new business.

12. Acknowledgement of retiring members

There are no retiring members this year.

13. Adjournment

Moved by: Elke Bews

*That the meeting be adjourned at 6:10 p.m. **Carried***

Approval of the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of June 20, 2016

Chairperson



Chairperson's Report

2016/2017 Annual General Meeting

It has been an exciting and exceptionally busy year at Huronia Transition Homes. Our social enterprise, Operation Grow has been a huge focus. The exceptional busy-ness has been experienced by the board and its working groups and committees, by Kathy, Germaine and Haily, as the pace of implementing Operation Grow has been challenging, to say the least. Taking on an initiative of this magnitude has stretched everyone, but, of course, everyone has risen to the occasion. The challenges for us pale when compared to the challenges faced by the women we serve.

Operation Grow is a response to the needs that have been expressed by the women we serve – for a safe place, for employment opportunities that will interrupt poverty and provide transferrable skills. Community support for Operation Grow has been overwhelming.

Of course, in addition to the focus on Operation Grow, high quality service has continued at HTH's three established programs – Maison Rosewood Shelter, Athena's and Choices for Children. All three programs continue to be heavily utilized – a testament to the quality of service and, unfortunately to the work yet to be done to eradicate violence against women.

In this reporting year, the Board regrettably said goodbye to Margaret Robertson, our previous chair. We miss Margaret's presence and regret that she was not able to continue on the board as past chair. We wish Margaret well and thank her for her years of service to the organization. The board welcomed Louise Stafford-Golisky and Jessica Connell to complete the slate mid-year. Louise was already an active member of the Operation Grow working group and Jessica's engagement with HTH goes back some years – Jessica worked at Rosewood as a summer student and was on the board briefly some 14 years ago.

Along with the business of the board, we include an educational component at most meetings. Since January (2017), we have had access to the governance resources developed by the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies. This includes webinars, videos and a resource library. We appreciate that the OACAS has made this rich resource available for our use. Over this year, we have made use of some of the OACAS assessment materials and a webinar. In April, Len Gamache, a certified fundraising executive, provided the board with an orientation to fundraising. We had a rich discussion at our May meeting regarding the challenges and ideas that Len had presented in April. The board has continued to focus on its development: in June, we held a Board Renewal session to further enhance our governance skills.

We have grown accustomed to having Eamonn O'Connell at most of our board meetings and Operation Grow working group meetings. Eamonn is a talented videographer and is capturing the process of our Operation Grow journey.

Take Back the Night was an inspirational and very well-attended event once again. More than 300 people gathered at Barrie City Hall (September 15, 2016) and then marched through the streets of downtown Barrie. The December 6 Vigil, at the Askennonia Seniors Centre was also well-attended. Kathy spoke about hope and the amazing work being done in our community to end violence against women. Dignitaries and invited guests were invited to read a quote from people in the anti-violence anti-oppression movement. While progress has been made since the tragedy at Ecole Polytechnique in 1989, women are still being experiencing violence and oppression. The board thanks the staff of HTH for organizing these important community events.

Efforts to make Maison Rosewood Shelter Pet Friendly are still underway. Unfortunately, due to staffing pressures and a lack of capital funding, plans have not moved ahead as quickly as we would have liked. However, much of the legwork has been completed and it is hoped that soon, Rosewood will have the capacity to accommodate pets, eliminating one more barrier that is sometimes in the way of women seeking safety. Dr. Barbara Ann Chidiac continues to champion this important initiative.

It has been a busy and exciting year. I extend my thanks to the board and, on behalf of the board, our thanks to Kathy and her amazing team who work on behalf of the women and children we serve. It is truly a privilege to serve HTH.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Henderson



Treasurer's Report

2016/2017 Annual General Meeting

Again this fiscal year, I am pleased to report the requirement for offsetting revenue to meet expenses was significantly reduced from the budgeted \$1,164,254 to \$459,645. This reduction was due to a grant of \$732,374 from the Ontario Ministry of the Status of Women in support of Operation Grow and a \$15,000 grant from the Women's exchange in support of Harm Reduction.

On behalf of the organization I would like to express our thanks to the Ministry of Community and Social Services, the Ministry of the Attorney General, Local Health Integration Network and the County of Simcoe for their ongoing support of Huronia Transition Homes.

As you are all probably aware, Operation Grow is scheduled to have its official opening in mid-August, fulfilling one of Huronia Transition Homes' major goals outlined in its strategic plan – a social enterprise to benefit the women we serve. We have started a major fund raising campaign to raise over \$4,000,000 for Operation Grow Phase I and Phase II.

I would like to thank Kathy Willis, Germaine Lesperance and Haily MacDonald for the many hours they have spent putting together grant proposals for this project. I would also like to thank Les Tuktaluke and the other members of the Operation Grow Working Group. Due to their many contacts and negotiating skills they have saved many thousands of dollars through donations of, or at cost only, goods and services for the renovation of the old LCBO building.

Respectfully submitted,

Annabelle Groves



HURONIA TRANSITION HOMES

PROPOSED MOTION:

Moved by: Annabelle Groves
Seconded by:

That the Audited Statements for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2017 be accepted as presented.



HURONIA TRANSITION HOMES

PROPOSED MOTION:

Moved by: Annabelle Groves
Seconded by:

That James Whittier Chartered Accountant is appointed as Auditors for Huronia Transition Homes for the fiscal 2017/2018.



Pet Friendly Working Group Report 2016/2017 Annual General Meeting

HTH is continuously looking at ways to minimize barriers for women trying to enter service. Our initiative to make La Maison Rosewood a pet-friendly shelter recognizes that women should not have to choose between their safety and the safety of their pets.

I am proud to be a member of our highly energetic and enthusiastic Pet Friendly Working Group with members of HTH's management team and shelter staff. Over the last year our Working Group has worked very hard to map the steps needed to move this project forward including:

- Writing the terms of reference for our working group;
- Seeking guidance and advice from other shelters including Maplegate and Fred Victor who are currently pet-friendly;
- Visiting the OSPCA to examine their kennels;
- Finalizing the project budget;
- Starting to develop the capital campaign by drafting a list of potential donors, and creating the materials necessary to begin to seek donations.

We estimate the total cost of this project will be \$20,000. This will allow us to make the shelter pet-friendly by converting the shelter shed to a kennel-like accommodation for pets, and convert an under-used area in the backyard into a "dog run".

Due to capacity concerns at HTH our Working Group has put the project on a temporary hold. We will begin our work again in the fall, at which time we will focus our attention on the launch of our capital campaign to fund the project. I look forward to pushing this project forward, and successfully making La Maison Rosewood pet friendly in the future!

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Ann Chidiac



Operation Grow Working Group Report 2016/2017 Annual General Meeting

The Working Group for Operation Grow was established in June 2016 to oversee the implementation of Huronia Transition Homes' social enterprise project.

The early stages of the Working Group involved seeking volunteers. Most of those came from the Board of Directors – Elke Bewes, Louise Stafford, Heather Henderson, Jacquie Skinner. Representing the staff of HTH are Kathy Willis, Haily MacDonald and Germaine Lesperance. Our solitary community volunteer is Les Tutkaluke and his contributions have been both numerous and valuable.

Our first significant decision as a Group was to find a suitable location for Operation Grow. We enlisted the services of Irene Wilson, a previous HTH Board member to help us. Given the specifications of the vertical farm equipment, it quickly became apparent that there was really only one suitable building in the downtown core of Midland – the old LCBO building on Bay Street. The purchase was finalized in December 2016. During that time, Kathy Willis reached out to a previous contact and was able to secure a highly respected Architectural firm to design and oversee this project at an extremely reasonable cost.

The renovations required to transform the LCBO building into the vibrant and functional space required by Operation Grow were significant. So began our search for a contractor that could partner with our Architecture firm to realize our vision. Using tools previously developed, we were able to reduce the number of potential candidates down to 3. Ultimately, Bertram Construction was awarded the contract and continues to share our vision as they work to complete the renovations in a timely and professional manner. We expect to be able to occupy the building in late July and begin to locally grow more than just produce shortly thereafter.

At the time of writing, our Working Group is focusing their attentions on a Donor Appreciation event and Grand Opening celebrations. All indications are that both events will be well attended and will benefit Operation Grow in a many ways.

The Working Group appreciates the interest and support of the Board of Directors in their project.

Respectfully Submitted
Jacquie Skinner



Executive Director's Report 2016/2017 Annual General Meeting

HTH has had its busiest year ever. We are currently expanding, enhancing and transforming the way we engage and support women and children and our community as a whole. We recognize the links between violence and poverty and we are building Operation Grow to address many of the issues related to poverty. The catalyst for Operation Grow is the women we serve. They asked us to support them by giving them a space to build networks and community, to give them an opportunity to make money and access good food. Operation Grow is our finest example of Huronia Transition Homes taking direction from the women we serve. Every aspect of this project has been designed/informed by research related to poverty reduction and social enterprise. We are very grateful to have been able to seek the advice of Dr. Kunle Akingbola of Lakehead University. He looked at our model and provided a business plan. We also partnered with Lakehead University to develop the evaluation of Operation Grow. The logic model and process map are complete and the evaluation team of Dr's Susan Scott, Angela Hovey and Kunle Akingbola are establishing a comprehensive evaluation framework. Operation Grow will be producing fresh greens and herbs in August and the facility should be fully operational in September. This project has been so well supported by the Board and its working group.

Service expansion has also been occurring at La Maison Rosewood Shelter as we have fully implemented a differential response to women exiting sex trafficking. Counselling and support staff across all programs have completed comprehensive training to enhance their skill in working with women who have been trafficked. Huronia Transition Homes has been a lead in establishing the Simcoe County Anti-Human Trafficking Coalition. This work has been supported by partners from across the County including: Chippewas of Rama First Nation Community and Family Services, Soldiers' Memorial Hospital Regional Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence Treatment Centre, Victim/Witness Assistance Program- Simcoe County, North Simcoe Victim Services, Orillia Ontario Provincial Police, Rama Police Services, Barrie Native Friendship Center, colibri centre des femmes francophones du comté du simcoe, Enahtig Healing Lodge and Learning Centre, Green Haven Shelter for Women, Lakehead University Department of Social Work, Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions (CAS)

We continue to participate on several committees including: the Ministry of the Attorney General Sexual Assault Centre Program Advisory Committee, the working group developing Sexual Assault Centre Program Standards, Children's Aid Society/Violence Against Women Collaboration Committee, Simcoe County Violence Against Women

Coordinating Committee, North Simcoe County Alliance to End Homelessness, Domestic Assault Response Team (Barrie), Domestic Assault Response Team (Midland), COMPASS (Midland), Situation Table (Midland), Situation Table (Barrie).

We were approached by Mary Ferguson a PHD candidate at the University of Guelph who would like to use Operation Grow as a case study in her dissertation. We readily agreed to participate.

We continued the work with local advocates to ensure the Obstetrics/Gynecology Services remain at Georgian Bay General Hospital. I am pleased to report that the Board of Georgian Bay General Hospital has made a commitment to continue to offer these critical services they are adapting a new model of obstetrics in order to ensure the longevity of the program.

We remain active in Barrie Pride celebrations. Huronia Transition Homes was honoured to be the recipient of Simcoe Pride's Positive Community Organization award. I had the honour of giving the key note address at Georgian College's Anti-Oppression Practice event. We were also invited to speak at the Simcoe County Elementary Occasional Teachers' International Women's Day dinner, the Toronto Violence against Women Network on Harm Reduction and I was a panelist with Gabor Maté at a CAST Canada conference on Harm Reduction.

This year we hosted our largest ever Take Back the Night march in Barrie and we had great participation at our December 6th event.

Huronia Transition Homes has had tremendous financial support this year. The Ministry of the Status of Women has provided us with additional \$430K to assist with renovation costs at Operation Grow. The Y's Men organized the 1st ever Walk a Mile in Her Shoes raising community awareness and \$6,452 for La Maison Rosewood Shelter.

It has been a year of hard work good news and over whelming support and none of this would be possible without the dedication and commitment of staff. To all the women who do direct service in our organization – Thank You! Thank you for making Huronia Transition Homes a true refuge. Your compassion, respect and understanding make such a difference to the women we serve. You are the foundation of this organization.

Thanks to Annick Brown, Sarah Hull, and Pat Wolstenholme for your hard work and commitment to making Huronia Transition Homes a great place to work. You provide much needed support and guidance.

And finally to my direct team it has been a year of constant push. Thanks Germaine for stretching and reaching and for all these new budgets and number crunching. You have remained steady in never ending work overload and I appreciate all you are doing to move us forward.

And to Haily MacDonald your commitment, tenacity, skill and energy have been unwavering in a very overwhelming year. Thank you for working all the crazy hours with me and for supporting the vision and co-creating a program that is truly innovative, intersectional, and accessible.

And to the Board of Directors for their stewardship of this organization your incredible work this last year demonstrates your commitment to Huronia Transition Home and the women we serve.

Respectfully submitted
Kathy Willis



HURONIA TRANSITION HOMES

PROGRAMS REVIEW 2016/2017

All Programs of HTH are offered within an integrated harm reduction framework.

La Maison Rosewood Shelter

Service area: North Simcoe



*Service Highlights:
117 women and 54 children stayed in
the shelter*

Emergency Shelter for Abused Women and their Children

La Maison Rosewood offers safe and secure shelter for abused women and their children 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. The average stay is approximately five weeks. Services are available in French and English and include crisis counselling, individual supportive counselling, advocacy, emergency transportation, resources and referral information, and assisting women in exploring options and developing plans to keep themselves safe.

Emergency Shelter for Homeless Women and their Children

La Maison Rosewood offers safe and secure shelter for homeless women and their children 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.

Exchange Works

In keeping with HTH's commitment to harm reduction, the organization participates in the Exchange Works program of the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, by providing safe injection and inhalation kits and resources to women, and by serving as a drop-off location for full sharps containers which are then safely disposed of by the Health Unit.

Service Highlights: 1,087 women served, 1,855 injection kits, 769 sharps containers distributed, 112 sharps containers returned

Crisis Line

The shelter provides a 24 hour per day, telephone crisis line for abused women in the community. In addition to immediate support, crisis intervention and assisting women in developing plans to keep themselves safe, counsellors also explore options with women and provide referrals and community resource information.

Service Highlights: 531 crisis calls

Outreach Program

This program provides service to women in the community who are leaving intimate partner abuse.

Service Highlights: 101 women served

An Outreach Counsellor is available to provide counselling, information, advocacy and support. Women can access this program through individual appointments and/or support groups, as available and appropriate.

A Legal Advocate is available to assist women in understanding the legal system and their legal rights. The Legal Advocate assists with document preparation, provides advocacy, and accompanies women attending court and/or other legal appointments.

Transition Program

This program provides service to women living at the shelter and to women living in the community who are leaving intimate partner abuse. The Transition Worker assists women in applying for Ontario Housing and Ontario Works, provides information on community resources and services, assists women in finding housing, helps with budgeting, provides advocacy, accompanies women to appointments, and helps women work toward achieving personal goals such as finding employment or returning to school.

Service Highlights: 96 women served

Public Education

As requested by the community, La Maison Rosewood undertakes public speaking engagements and/or provides workshops on issues related to violence against women and children.

La Maison Rosewood develops and maintains positive relationships with local media to foster access to a broader audience.

Child Support Program

This program provides support, counselling and advocacy as well as recreational and craft activities for children residing at the shelter with their mothers. Additionally, Child Support Workers provide support and counselling for women around parenting issues and challenges, as well as assuming care of children while mothers attend appointments.

Athena's Sexual Assault Counselling & Advocacy Centre

Service area: Simcoe County



*Service Highlights:
762 crisis calls*

Crisis Line

Athena's Sexual Assault Counselling & Advocacy Centre provides a 24 hour per day telephone crisis line, which offers immediate support, crisis intervention, and resource and referral information for women aged 16 and over, who have experienced sexual abuse/assault at any point in their lives.

Crisis Counselling

This program provides supportive counselling for a period of up to 6 months. Crisis Counsellors work with women to contain the trauma they have experienced and assist women in normalizing their feelings and experiences. Services are offered individually and in a group format, as available and appropriate. Crisis Counsellors also provide community resource information, referrals to services, advocacy, and accompaniment to appointments as required.

Service Highlights: 226 women served

In-Depth Counselling

This program provides longer term counselling for a period of up to 1 year. In-depth Counsellors work with women to examine the impact of sexual violence on their lives and assist women in working toward resolution of self-determined issues related to their experiences. Services are offered individually and in a group format, as available and appropriate.

Service Highlights: 118 women served

Community Development

The Community Development Coordinator, along with program staff, coordinates public education and awareness events regarding the issue of sexual violence against women. Services to the community include public speaking engagements, workshops and training as requested.

*Service Highlights:
121 workshops*

Choices for Children

Service area: Simcoe County



*Service Highlights:
80 women and 142 children served*

Choices for Children is a county-wide program designed to provide support and follow-up for children who have been exposed to intimate violence against their mothers. The program provides a safe, respectful, empowering environment, wherein children are supported in talking about their experiences, exploring their feelings, developing new understandings and coping strategies, and learning about abuse.

The mothers' group offers women an opportunity to discuss how witnessing violence has affected their children, to connect with one another around a common experience, to share resources, and to learn about the weekly content of the children's program. Women are offered assistance in developing strategies to help support and validate their children. The ultimate goal is to strengthen the bond between Mom and her children.

Services to women and their children include both group participation and individual support.