

AGENDA
Children First Society Annual General Meeting
To be Held at the Children First Centre, Inuvik NT
Thursday, September 24, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order
2. Additions/Deletions to the Agenda
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Introductions
5. Approval of Minutes
 - 5.1 Minutes of September 16, 2014 Annual General Meeting
6. Reports
 - 6.1 Chair Report: Summary of past year
 - 6.2 Financial Report: presentation of Audited Financial Statements Fiscal 2014
 - 6.3 Executive Directors Report
7. Election of Auditor - KPMG
8. Nominations of Chair and Directors
9. Election
10. Other Business
11. Next Meeting
12. Adjournment

MINUTES

Children First Society Annual General Meeting

To be Held at the Children's First Centre

Tuesday, September 16th, 2014 at 8:00 p.m.

6 members of the public

CBC and Inuvik Drum

Present:

Fraser Pearce	Mike Harlow	Eric Church	Adam Wright
Michelle Wright	Jo-Anne Kinsella	Newton M. Grey	Kelly Penner
Anick Jenks	Lisa Keegan-Drennan		Patricia Davison
Donald Prince	Jody Prince	David Thorton	

1. **Call to Order**
8:12
2. **Additions/Deletions to the Agenda**
No additions
3. **Adoption of Agenda**
Eric Church, Newton Grey - Carried
4. **Introductions**
Fraser, Newton, Joanna, Adam, Eric Church (Fundraising Officer), Kelly Penner (Secretary), Patricia Davidson (ED)
5. **Approval of Minutes**
 - 5.1 **Minutes of October 10th, 2013 Annual General Meeting**
Newton Grey, Mark Sommerfeld - Carried
6. **Reports**
 - 6.1 **Chair Report**
Eric Church, Mark Sommerfeld - Carried
 - 6.2 **Audited Financial Statements 2013-2014**
Adam Wright, Newton Grey - Carried

Income statement for current year – not in 'Other business', review currently
FP – Described the income statement highlighting the Centre is running a deficit but explained there is no real reason for concern at this point.
EC – if certain outstanding agreement funding comes in we should break even?
FP – correct.
MS – we're operating at deficits. Where would projected \$76,000 surplus have gone?
FP – Correct. Would have gone into the bank. \$90,000 was anticipated that have not been received from Language Nest Funding. Anticipate it will come in eventually.
FP – bank balance very low for month's end, but we anticipate the situation will

improve once enrollment fees in September come in
FP – owe ~\$65,000 for various items. Running a payable balance between \$40,000 and \$60,000/month that has impacted finances. Have requested GNWT for contributions to allow for easier cash flow management. Awaiting outcome of these discussions.

FP – bridge loan for construction will be cleared once CanNor submits final payment installment expected soon.

6.3 Executive Directors Report

No questions.

Incredible to see progress of some children as well as curriculum development.

Centre has come a long way since it opened its doors.

Recognized staff members who show extra dedication

Enrollment lower than at same time last year.

8. Election of Auditor

Sever agreement with existing auditor – fees not clear

KPMG have offered a quote that is comparable to existing Auditor fees

Large companies offer advantages and dis-advantages – we're small so easy numbers but might get lost in the shuffle

LKD – when does decision need to be made?

FP – at the AGM

NG – statements that we received weren't the clearest. Only fair to look at other options and see if we can get a better deal.

MS – are we expecting to pay \$6200 + \$1000 again?

FP – charged an additional \$1,000 due to existing auditors unexpected change in what we look at.

LKD – Are we expecting the \$1,000 extra charge again?

FP – No

MS – what was the quality of his work?

FP – Not as clear as we would have liked, sometimes difficult to discern what was allocated where. Worried that each revision was going to cost more each time.

EC – will the bigger company be able to be flexible enough to handle similar situations in the future?

FP – there is a negotiation at the start as to what gets allocated where. Marci would be able to speak better on it, however, she did voice concerns over the quality of the audit we received this year.

NG – I remember stresses Marci felt and we should do what we can to alleviate that situation if we can. Get three majors to provide quotes to compare that provide the service we need.

FP – Motion – 'Discontinue relationship with current auditor and request KPMG complete the audit for the current and next two fiscal years, pending no lower quote being received by another firm in the interim'.

MS – with the understanding that there is no consequence to severing ties with our existing auditor

FP - Correct

Newton Grey, Mark Sommerfeld - Carried

9. Nominations of Chair and Directors

CHAIR - Newton Grey and Eric Church for Kelly Penner, CFS Chairperson

DIRECTORS – Eric Church and Adam Wright for Mike Harlow; Adam Wright and Mike Harlow for Eric Church, Joanne Kinsella and Eric Church for Newton Grey, Newton Grey and Anick Jenks for Adam Wright, Eric Church and Anick Jenks for Lisa Keegan-Drennan, Eric Church and Lisa Keegan-Drennan for Lisa Mackenzie

10. Election

Motion – to approve of those selected for positions:

Mark Sommerfeld and Michelle Wright, Carried

11. Other Business

NG – a big thank you to Fraser for his hard work and dedication. It was a lot of hours and we would not be where we are without your effort and dedication. From me and all of us a big thank you. (APPLAUSE!)

12. Next Meeting - TBD

13. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 9:10pm. Eric Church – Carried

**Children First Society
Chair Report for the 2015 AGM
September 24, 2015**

Introduction

In this second full year of operation in the Children First Centre, the Children First Society dealt with significant challenges. Thanks to the dedication of staff, board and volunteers we have worked through most of them and are positioned to continue and expand our services to Inuvik's children and families.

Property Transfer

Our first priority in the fall of 2014 was to complete the property transfer of the Children First Centre to the Town of Inuvik, which was a condition of Town funding for the building project. Due to a potential perception of conflict of interest with my employment, vice chair Mike Harlow took the lead to get this completed and the building is now owned by the Town. It was the last major step in the building project and we looked forward to concentrating on operations.

Financial Challenges

Over the course of the fall it became clear that the economic downturn was affecting our financial situation. The rising cost of utilities, fewer employed parents and fewer fundraising dollars to go around all contributed to a worsening financial picture. The board started looking at options for improving the bottom line, including reducing expenses, expanding services, building new partnerships, increasing fees, and advocating for increased government support. It was clear that all avenues would have to be pursued to balance the books. I would like to recognize the contributions of staff to these discussions – some of the most creative and common sense ideas came directly from the front lines.

Building Damage

We were making plans to hold a strategic planning session when "March 1" happened. The windstorm that went through town took down part of the Centre's ceiling and with it part of the sprinkler system, resulting in major water damage. We are extremely grateful that no children were in the building and no one was hurt. Over the following days and weeks we also had many more reasons to be grateful - to parents for their understanding, encouragement and patience as we made alternate plans, to community partners – both organizations and individuals - who stood beside us and helped us get back on our feet, and to staff who maintained their positive outlook and continued to concentrate on the needs of the children and making it all work for them.

It quickly became clear that our insurance would not cover all of our losses from the event, and during this time we also received news that two significant expected chunks of funding would not be coming through. We began to seriously consider whether Children First could continue. We had previously contacted the Minister of ECE and our local MLAs to let them know of our issues and to advocate for increased funding for early childhood, as rates paid have not increased since the 1990s. We again contacted them after the storm. We have much reason to be thankful for their support. Both of our MLAs helped arrange meetings with key ministers and other MLAs, and advocated to the Minister of ECE

on our behalf. As a result the Department has agreed to cover our losses over and above what insurance will pay, amounting to approximately \$115,000.

There is no possible way I can list all of the people and organizations who have assisted us through this time, but there are a few I have not yet mentioned that I do not want to miss. These include:

- Aurora College, Town of Inuvik and Inuvik Inter-agency for sharing space with us so that our program could continue to operate while the building was being repaired.
- United Way for donating funds to help with emergency costs.
- Inuvik Chamber of Commerce for partnering on fundraisers and donating funds.

Strategic & Business Plans

Over the summer we were able to get all programming moved back in to the Children First Centre, and we returned to focusing on strategy. With all of the changes it was clear a new business plan would need to be done. With funding from the Department of ITI a consultant was hired and met with the board as well as doing numerous interviews with community partners, parents and staff. A draft strategic plan has been developed (an overview is available) and he is working on a business analysis plan, so called because it is difficult to see how the Centre can remain viable in the long term without increased rates of support. We are not alone in facing this issue and it is under review within the Department of ECE.

Current Situation

As of the present date our financial situation is improving. As contribution agreements come in we are beginning to be able to pay off outstanding debts. Our attendance is close to what it was before the windstorm damage. We have started to explore and implement new ideas, including:

- Tiered fee structure to assist lower income families with accessing our services
- Drop-in rates
- Facility rentals including catering
- New partnerships and programming ideas
- Potentially expanded service hours.

We continue to advocate for increased government funding for early childhood development.

Conclusion

Thank you again to all who have organized and volunteered for fundraisers and other projects, and to those who made donations of time or money, whether large or small. I would also like to thank the board for their hard work and dedication through this difficult year, it has been an honour to work with you. And finally, thank you again to Patricia and the staff who spend their time with our children, and truly care for them. Knowing they are in your good hands is priceless.

"It's for our kids."

Kelly Penner
Chair

Executive Director's Report

We have completed two full years of programming. It has been a challenging time with much extra work and dedication from the board of directors and staff and to get us through the past year of ongoing obstacles. Our outgoing chairperson Kelly Penner has been instrumental in the ability to stay the course during this time. I thank the families, the children, the staff and the Board members for their support of CFC during these trying times.

Enrolment

- We have had 136 children registered in the program throughout the year. Compared to 164 last year. The building issue, a 2 week closure and having 4 separate locations for a few months, caused the enrollment to drop off for that period of time leading into summer.
- 35 children have stayed consistently since last fall. The rest have been a flow and ebb. Currently we have 72 children registered. Compared to 75 this time last year. So our numbers are steadily increasing to past levels.
- We are licensed for 127 spaces, which would mean every space even the multipurpose areas would be used as a home room.
- Infant program has 12 children and are licenced for 16 infants. With 2 on the wait list.
- Preschool has 32 children and are licenced for 71 With 2 on the wait list
- School age has 28 children and are licenced for 40

The families of these 136 children have contributed over 2,000 hours of volunteer time.

Staffing

- We currently have 18 permanent staff positions.
- We have had just over 50% staff retention with 9 of the original hires still in their positions
- 9 Staff have enrolled in accredited Early Childhood courses, 7 have successfully completed a minimum of 1 course. These courses included Child Growth and Development, Building Self Esteem, Introduction to Early Childhood and Field Placement. 5 staff are registered in ECD courses for this fall.
 - In house training this year has included Fire Extinguisher Use, First Aid, Language Development, Food Safe, Emergent Curriculum Planning, WHMIS, and Children's Restraint System Technician.
 - Staff choose a criteria to recognize their peers. Criteria:
 - 1) Finished probationary period,
 - 2) Role Model who represents organization favourably,
 - 3) Strong work Attendance
 - 4) Successful completion of ECD courses

With this criteria in mind 3 staff have been chosen this year for recognition.

Sharon Awichen
Lydia O'Connor
Doreen Esagok

These three show a true dedication to the organization, the children and the families.

Lydia has been amazing since day one. Back in August of 2013 she took on the responsibility of the Preschool 1 room. This consists of supporting the development of mostly 2 year olds, helping toilet train, learn to use their words and figure out peer relationships and good manners. It is a role she has embraced taking early childhood courses and learning about toddler development in a very hands on way. Her gentle but firm manner helps the children reach their greatness. She is in the building before and after her shift touching base with families and finishing up tasks for the team.

Sharon is a leader in child development exhibiting professionalism at all levels. It shows in her attendance, her interactions with the families and children as well as in her marks in the ECD course work. In the absence of an Infant Team Leader, Sharon has recently taken on the role and supports the team to reach their greatness.

Doreen has registered in every ECD course and workshop Aurora College has offered since she started working at CFC. Her desire to learn about the children she works with and provide an exciting emergent curriculum is demonstrated daily. She role models and instills in the children her passion for lifelong learning.

Programming

Children First Society has some of the most exceptional staff. This year brought more programming issues than I have seen in my decades of supporting families. Cleaning up a building disaster by picking through piles of water soaked toys and materials. Packing up to move out and in again. Providing programming in temporary spaces. Cleaning, packing, unpacking, more cleaning, setting up and all without complaint and with limited resources. They have pulled together and continued an exciting learning curriculum that meets the individual needs of the children and scaffolds the developmental progress.

Field trips and visitors have included:

ARI	Fire Department	NorthMart	Inuvialuit Corporate Building
Green House	Sliding	RCMP	Swimming
Public Health	CIBC	Dental Hygienist	

- We also continue our community drop in program Wednesdays from 10:00am -11:30am in the gym for children 5years and under with an adult.
- We support children who have developmental challenges in a variety of ways including the speech therapists visiting to hold sessions with various children.
- We had another year of strong cultural presence including staff that supported Gwich'in Language and Culture and Inuvialuit Language and Culture. Cutting moose, plucking geese, carving, beading, sewing, and our phrase of the week:

Other

We would not have made it through this year without everyone's support and understanding. Our many partners that helped us include: The Department of ECE, one staff in particular that came and found us at an alternative site to sign of some paper work for one of our agreements, she waited until each staff signed the appropriate papers. The list goes on United Way, Aurora College, GTC, IRC, The GNWT Social Standing Committee, the GNWT as a whole, The Inuvik Interagency, the Inuvik Youth Centre, The Inuvik Justice Committee, Healthy Families, The Inuvik Fire Department these are just a few of our supporters. There are always ways to continue to help the programs and facility. See the committee signup sheets for ideas.



Strategic Plan

2015-2018

DRAFT

Values

The things we do affect people's lives. That's why we believe in:

- Always remembering that we do this for the children;
- Being leaders in child development, exhibiting professionalism at all levels, including:
 - Providing a safe, healthy, and stable environment and organization that everyone can depend on;
 - Pursuing our passion for lifelong learning;
 - Respecting and celebrating diversity;
 - Building and maintaining strong partnerships;
 - Innovation
 - Community engagement; and
 - Being fair and accountable to the children, staff, partners and community.

Vision

We envision a future where happy and healthy children grow up to become healthy and happy adults who benefit Inuvik and society as a whole. The Children First Society's child development services help children to achieve their greatness!

The Children First Society is thriving, accessible to all families, and operated sustainably.

Mission

The Children First Society provides child development services for all children in Inuvik to help them achieve their greatness! The Society does this through the delivery of child development programs, and child, family, and public education.

Goals

1. To be a centre of excellence for child development
2. To have child development programming accessible to all children in Inuvik



Strategic Plan

2015-2018

DRAFT

Objectives

1. Delivery of ECD programming that meets the goals of the NWT ECD strategy and is appropriately supported by the GNWT
2. Effective communication between the board, management, members, and partners
3. Increase board capacity through portfolio development and targeted recruitment
4. Strong and supportive partnerships
5. Increase enrolment to 100% of program capacity 2018, with participation by children representative of Inuvik's population
6. Increase donations by 10%/year, with all donations and fundraising initiatives tied directly to special programs, initiatives, and tuition for children
7. Explore additional revenue-generating opportunities
8. Increase staff retention to 80%
9. 100% of program delivery staff are fully qualified by 2018
10. Improved financial oversight and stability