



**9-10 Club Serving Soup to the Hungry Society
Board of Directors Meeting, Tuesday January 11, 2022 (virtual)**

MINUTES

Attending: Alexandra Banford, Sheila Connelly, Stef Hartwig, Teri Hustins, Dan Hickey, Keith Hutchison, Gordon MacNeil, Laurel Nash, Susan Nawrocki

Call to Order: 16:00

Approval of Agenda: (m/s - Susan/Dan)

Approval of Minutes: (m/s – Susan/Dan)

1. Action items from Dec. 14 meeting: the situation with Freedom Centre concerns was updated. An organization (SOLID) to help clean up discarded needles should be contacted when necessary and the telephone number of SOLID will be available in Seghers Hall. The situation seems better at the moment but a watching brief will remain in effect. Gordon reported that there had been discussions on financial reporting with Pat and Daniel since the last meeting. Matters related to the marketing committee that were discussed in December come forward for the January meeting, as well – this is an ongoing discussion.
2. Financial report: This was a wide-ranging discussion with much participation from different board members. Daniel presented verbally the essentials of the written document that he had prepared for the board meeting, defining various elements of how the organization operates; this was especially important inasmuch as there are new board members who had not had much exposure to the financial operations of the Soup Kitchen. Daniel then presented the financial results for the 6 months ended 31 December 2021, and explained in some detail why expenditure numbers have risen (mainly food cost increases), and explained how/why the organization had purchased a major kitchen appliance in 2021. There are some financial items still to be dealt with, such as updating bank signing authority. He updated the situation with SK investments, now totalling some \$800,000 and noted that we will have the investment advisor attend the March board meeting, where an update on performance will be provided, and where we will request quarterly reports from Wood Gundy. Susan explained that

we will have the full data on 2021 donations next week as we are still awaiting final tabulation for December. However, December 2021 was an outstanding month with approximately \$160,000 received from various sources. According to Susan, December is always a high-income period for the Soup Kitchen. Finally, it was agreed that the SK should obtain a “tap machine” for easy collection of donations when these are in-person drives, such as at the recent Festival of Lights. At the conclusion of the meeting Daniel requested that going forward it will be very useful to have a more granular accounting of actual expenditures in the different budget categories, not just for food.

The financial report was approved (m/s – Stef/Sheila)

3. Financial analysis and discussion: With regard to financial aspects of the strategic plan, Pat, Daniel, and Gordon will work on a financial analysis to support decision-making in future meetings.
4. Strategic Plan priorities for 2022: After confirming with the board that the initiatives for 2021-2022 in the action plan (page 7) are still valid, she reviewed all them in sequence. Items #1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11 are all completed. Item #3 (setting up a committee to recruit and train new volunteers) is, according to Sheila, an ongoing effort and does not require a committee *per se* to continue the effort. #6 (financial assessment of funding against expenses) is ongoing. #7 (fundraising schedule) will depend on the results of the financial assessment report. #12 (assess accounting software package) will be reviewed to see if it can easily be transferred when the time comes, from Pat’s computer to another one, depending on whom might some day take on the accounting responsibility for the SK. Also, Pat is exploring a resource to assist with donation tracking, should this become a future need. Items #13-15 are on the agenda of the marketing committee for follow up.
5. Marketing: Steph and Alexandra confirmed that they will meet and devise a [plan for fundraising, and asked for other board member assistance in this important and fundamental action. Laurel, Susan, Dan, and Sheila all pledged to assist when possible. There was general discussion with some directors providing information based on their experiences and what seems to be the reality – such as that the /soup Kitchen is largely unknown in Victoria despite its 40 years of providing such an important service and despite past PR events such as newspaper articles, and even dignitary involvement for photo-ops. Susan reminded the meeting that the SK has always had funding and enthusiastic volunteers, so sustaining finances and renewal of staffing has not really been a problem to date. But the meeting agreed that after 40 years we can do better and we must not rest on the successes of the past. The meeting was also reminded that we have an almost unique selling point: that as a 100% volunteer organization, we can truthfully say that our administrative cost is 0%, and that 100% of all donations go for what we advertise as our mission.

6. Provincial Employee Services Community Fund: This agenda item is a carry-forward from the December meeting. Laurel suggested that we might explore the option of participating in the Provincial Employee Services Community Fund program whereby government employees can choose to donate to the Soup Kitchen as one of their charitable contributions. Laurel will follow up on the possibility of the SK joining as an accredited charity for this programme.

7. Operations: Sheila had prepared a detailed written report of the highly successful December operation, including the Christmas opening and special provisions on that day. The meeting proceeded to discuss a number of items as they relate to current operational realities and even additional risks due to the OMICRON variant of COVID-19. First, there is a clear trend of food volume increases, as the number of clients we serve continues to grow. We must budget for this, as it is unlikely that food costs, which have risen alarmingly, will decrease. Second, there is a proposal to increase the protein content in bagged lunches, including yoghurt and peanut butter. The board approved a trial for this, which will cost an estimated additional \$275/week based on current numbers of clients (this excludes packaging which is not expected to be a significant expense). To cover all estimated cost the board approved a budget of \$1,300 for a one-month period and the experience will be assessed at a future meeting. Finally, there was an animated discussion of the current mask policy and possible enhancements to it, again given the highly infectious OMICRON virus. After consideration of requiring (or at least strongly encouraging) the use of N95 or KN95 masks, it was agreed that for reasons of discomfort over a long period, and the reality of ill-fitting masks which diminish their effectiveness anyway, the sense that there was not much enthusiasm for this. It led to the decision to ask team leaders how they feel better protection – without the N95 masks – could be encouraged.

8. Round table check-in: The letter from Fr. Lester of St. Andrews was raised, but no decision was taken as to a response at this point. It remains a pending issue. Finally, it was suggested that since the board meetings now seem to run to at least 1.5 hours, perhaps we should acknowledge the reality that it may not be just a function of needing to spend more time briefing new directors, and that we should schedule the longer period going forward, for planning purposes. The meeting agreed (m/s – Dan/Sheila)

The meeting adjourned at 17:40