

# Nelson House of Ottawa Carleton

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AGM- SEPTEMBER 13, 2023



**NELSON HOUSE**  
OF OTTAWA CARLETON

# Nelson House Annual General Meeting Agenda

## September 13, 2023

1. Welcome and opening remarks
2. Voting Procedure
3. Approval of the Agenda
4. Approval of the Minutes of the 2022 AGM
5. Executive Director's Message and Operations Report
6. Message from the Board of Directors- Board Chair
7. Board Committee Reports
8. Financial Statements
9. Appointment of the auditors
10. Resolution to approve the Board Slate

*Break- 10 minutes*

11. Her Story
12. Thank you
13. Fundraising Initiatives
14. Adjournment



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# Nelson House 2023 AGM

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1. Welcome and opening remarks
2. Voting Procedure
3. Approval of the Agenda
4. Approval of the Minutes of the 2022 AGM



"I had everything I needed, but what helped me the most was the emotional support all staff gave me."



# Nelson House 2023 AGM

## 5. Message from the Executive Director

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### A year in review

1. Coming out of COVID- continued changes and impact on service stability
  2. Internal stressors
    - Mental Health supports (staff dv training workshops; “Your Health Space”- series of workshops)
    - Sector-wide turnover (lack of corporate knowledge creating hurdles to progress, adding stressors to mentorship, mostly young staff)
    - Administrative Support loss- payroll, bookkeeping/financial, policy + building new processes
  3. Increased expenses coupled with diminishing resources (transpo, childcare, MCCSS)
  4. Changes in needs and services- mental health supports, advocacy
    - **Housing- 3 month (SP & US) stays** have become 8 months to 1 year. Shelters are now **long-term facilities while crisis calls increase in numbers and urgency**
    - **Children-** larger families with children under 8, **trauma effects showing up earlier and earlier** in the form of developmental issues, behavioural issues, overt trauma responses.
    - **Women in shelter-** complex psychiatric needs, trafficking, addictions, alarming increase in suicidal ideation
- **The Good News:** with strong staff and Board support we have been building a strong foundation to address these changes. I am pleased and confident in the progress we’ve made in such a short time.



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“I’m so glad a place like this exists. This was my first time in a shelter, adjusting to starting over felt like mountains to climb.”

# Statistics – prior year comparison

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## 2022-2023

### Residential Support Services

- Women- 42
- Children- 31

### Crisis Line

- Crisis calls – 868
- Individuals referred out capacity limitations – 655
- Total 1523

### Transitional Support Served

- Individuals served - 101
- Individualized in-person interactions – 693

- \* lower due to housing crisis & numbers peaked during covid

## 2021-2022 prior year

### Residential Support Services

- Women- 101
- Children- 51

### Crisis Line

- Crisis calls received and referred or assisted- 904

### Transitional Support Services

- Individuals served - 119
- Individualized in-person interactions- 958

# Clients served 2018-2023

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Year	THSP Clients	Women Residents	Children Residents	Total Residents
2018-19	60	54	59	113
2019-20	76	54	59	113
2020-21	94	34	31	65
2021-22	116	50	51	101
2022-23	101	42	31	73
2023 Q1&Q2	35	18	16	34

# Program Reports- Frontline

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Frontline did not see much turnover with residents because of the severe **Housing Crisis**. Staff had to take on much more **advocacy and administrative support** than in years past supporting residents with housing applications.

As a result, some of our families were granted both Special Priority and Urgent Safety by the Housing Registry and were able to move out.

Stays ranged from **3 months to almost a year**, compared to our usual 3-month stay.

Nevertheless, we were able to find housing for several families and single women, and what's more, continue our work to support women to believe in themselves again.

With an **unprecedented rise in Mental Health crises**, and the impact of **longer stays in shelter**, Frontline has been working diligently to support women's different needs effectively. We have also been able to extend the day-to-day crisis work done by those staff with more experience and training.

The **Split Shift Bridge (SSB)** position adds great strength to the team, with much-needed support during the day when things tend to be busier, taking pressure off daytime staff. This is a one-year contract, not a permanent position and offers support to daytime staff when needed.

The SSB and PM have been working to build **more programming called Building Your Toolbox**, to start this fall for the women that come to NH. The program will include a wide range of educational sessions about abuse, trauma, stress, coping skills etc., bringing in presenters for Art therapy, yoga, self-defense, and some relaxation sessions. Babysitting and light snacks will also be provided. Women will finish the course with a workbook or 'toolkit' they can take with them.

# Program Reports- Children's Program

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Nelson House supported approximately **22 children since December 2022**.

The **number of children at Nelson House at any given time has been consistently high**. Although our maximum is usually eight children, we recently have had ten or eleven, most being under the age of six years old.

We continue to work with **Andrew Fleck**, an agency that has been providing wonderful caregivers for almost thirty years to all the shelters in Ottawa. This program has been funded by the City of Ottawa's respite care program and is unfortunately coming to an end in December this year. We are working with Andrew Fleck, other shelters, and the City to try to find a way to continue this essential service.

Our **summer program** just ended. We were fortunate to receive funding for a summer student through the **Canada Summer Jobs Program** again this year however the contract was reduced significantly from last year. However, this support did allow for more programming this summer with weekly outings (the Experimental Farm, splash pads, local parks, the Museum of Science and Technology, the Museum of Nature, the Art Gallery, and the most popular destination: Bubblesea Adventures, an indoor playground for small children).

We were especially fortunate to have some of the funds from "**100 Men Who Care**" and the "**Ottawa Community Foundation**" (the Bhayabhai and Urmila Valia Family Charitable Endowment Fund) to support **summer programming**. Allowing us to treat our children to rich and diverse experiences.

Additional funding went toward the purchase of more supplies for programming such as a slip-and-slide for the hottest days, new sand, and sand toys, as well as chalk, paint and other art supplies. We offered planned science experiments, cooking adventures, and the occasional treat of ice cream on a hot summer day.

It is now **back to school/daycare time**. We are busy supporting families to register and safety plan around attending. We can provide families with backpacks stuffed with school supplies, generously donated by our long-time sponsor **Na'Amat**, who offers this donation to all Ottawa shelters.

Soon enough, we will be preparing for Christmas!



# Program Reports- Transitional Support

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The TSW program has had a steady stream of new referrals with support focused on **safe housing, safety planning, legal assistance, counselling services, and referrals for other community services and supports**. This year the TSW program has had increased requests for more in-person support and advocacy from clients and we anticipate this to continue.

The biggest challenge this year for the TSW program has been **changes within the housing registry** such as new staffing, changes to the **application process** and the **status of women fleeing domestic violence**, and the **development of a new special priority application**.

These changes not only made it **more difficult for survivors of abuse and trafficking to receive special priority status, but also left them feeling re-victimized at times by the housing registry's process and questioning**.

The new special application focuses on **requirements that survivors of abuse and trafficking might find challenging**, such as providing **proof of cohabitation**, even though legislation had already been amended to not require this from survivors if it put them at risk to do so.

The VAW sector (Shelter EDs, Managers, TSWs, etc.) met and as a sector advocated to the housing registry. There have been some changes but progress is slow and this only adds to the stress of the women whose lives are essentially in limbo while with us.

The TSW Program is working towards a collaboration between Nelson House TSW and Ottawa Family Services. We are also continuing to build positive relationships with organizations/agencies and the systems in which TSWs need to navigate to help clients access support and resources like **OPS, Housing, Legal, financial assistance, etc.**

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## 6. Message from the Board of Directors



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## 7. Board Committee Reports

- Fundraising Committee
- Governance Committee
- Health and Safety Committee
- Human Resource Committee
- Finance Committee



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# Fundraising Committee

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**Strategic Fundraising Planning Document** 2020 updated Spring 2023.

Outlines a plan forward: diversified revenue strategy; increased individual donations; corporate sponsorship; events; private foundations; and government funding.

- Exploring **grants** through Women's Shelters Canada, Realtor's Care grant, Mary Kay Ash Foundation, Trillium Foundation, and Ottawa Community Foundation

**Digital Audit Report** Spring 2023. A need for greater social media presence and engagement, as well as suggestions to improve the website.

**The addition of a full-time Fundraising and Communications Coordinator**, Lindsay Newman is leading the charge with a current focus on developing an individual donor prospect list and launching the Circle of Care Monthly Giving initiative. So far, \$1,176 donated from the prospect list.

**Recent Fundraising Events:** Rideau View Ladies Golf Tournament, Merivale Drive in, GCWCC.

- Nelson House has been selected by Lowe's Nepean, RONA Home and Garden Nepean, Shoppers' Giving Shelter Campaign for in-store donations this September.

**Future Plans:** Giving Campaign (Fall), Susan Sherring Legacy Event (September 28), Giving Tuesday (November), Gala (December)

# Governance Committee

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## Year in Review

Priorities: to build upon prior year priorities such as bringing further clarity to the roles and responsibilities of different Board committees and to focus on recruiting members to the Board

Key achievements:

- **Reviewed Terms of Reference of all Committees** to ensure consistency across committees regarding policies and procedures and made recommendations to align processes
- Ran a **formal recruitment for new Board members** for 2023, resulting in hiring 4 new board members
- Reviewed **Board Policies to identify any gaps or necessary amendments** and made several recommendations and implemented new policies such as the new Confidentiality Agreement, mandatory for all members
- Began work on the **Nelson House strategic plan**, in collaboration with the Executive Director, to guide Nelson House over the next three years. A decision was taken to strike a separate ad hoc Committee, the Strategic Action Plan Committee, to carry this work forward
- The Committee members also helped to plan and lead an in-person **full day orientation for new Board members**

## Looking Ahead

The Governance Committee's priorities over the next year will include an ongoing recruitment campaign to fill a few recent vacancies on the Board and to continue to review and make any appropriate recommendations to the suite of Policies and Procedures for the Board's governance



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# Health and Safety Committee

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Key Highlights of ongoing initiatives include **updating emergency procedures and equipment**, creating **emergency protocol training videos for staff**, maintaining health and safety **inspections and upkeep of the building and property**, testing of the **security/fire alarm systems**, maintaining adequate security systems, and **updates on Serious Occurrence and Incident Reports**.

The Nelson House Joint Health and Safety Committee remains committed to fostering a safe and secure environment for all residents and staff and to continue to address challenges, enhance health and safety protocols, and maintain open communication channels.



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# Human Resource Committee

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## **Year in Review**

The Committee's priorities this year were to support the Executive Director in the hiring of new and key staff positions to support Nelson House operations, as well as review policy and budgeting information in preparation for upcoming Collective Agreement (CA) renegotiations. The HR committee also refreshed the process and documentation for the annual performance evaluation of the Executive Director.

### Key achievements:

- Reviewed Terms of Reference of HR Committee
- Support for ED in budgeting, recruiting and hiring for key and new Staff positions (Comms, Admin, Philanthropy/Fundraising)
- Support for Pay Equity Review
- Ongoing support and tracking for HR challenges such as Staff on LT leave/departures, staff training, privacy policy, etc.
- Ongoing review of key HR Policy and Documentation
- Ongoing work to review benefits as related to unionized and non-unionized staff and uncoupling of entitlements from the CA in preparation for upcoming Collective Bargaining

## **Looking Ahead**

The HR Committee's priorities over the next year will include working collaboratively with the Executive Director in renegotiating the Collective Agreement (CA) for Nelson House, on-going support and advisory for personnel issues and roadblocks, and continued review and updates to HR-related Board Policies and Procedures.

# Finance Committee

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The 2022-23 Fiscal year was another busy year with **many changes**.

Nelson House experienced a **complete changeover of the administrative staff** – in June 2022 Christy Savage was hired in the ED role, the bookkeeper of over 10 years, Amanda Mclead moved out of town and was replaced by Anna Griga, and in October 2022 the primary Administrative Coordinator, Claudia Serrano, had to go on a long-term sick leave after being infected with the Covid virus. Eventually, this role was filled by 2 new employees Connie Cashman and Sue Jimmo. Throughout this period the **Finance Committee Chair worked closely with Christy**, to bring her up to speed on cash flow and managing the shelter from a financial perspective.

Despite the pandemic stabilizing there was still **much uncertainty in the financial world last fiscal year, and it continues**.

The Board decided to invest some funds in several **GICs** which mature at different times throughout the year. This achieved two goals

- 1) to ensure that there were regular cash injections if needed during a period where COVID grants and funding were coming to an end and
- 2) provide additional interest revenue.

This process will continue until we implement the future fundraising strategy.

In **October 2022 the Collective Agreement** for the period April 2021 – March 2024 was finalized, and the **Finance Committee Chair assisted with ensuring staff were** paid the retroactive pay increases they were entitled to.

The Finance Committee also continued to review the financial statements monthly, helped Christy to prepare her first budget for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, and reviewed and updated various financial policies to reflect changes resulting from working in a more electronic environment.

Many thanks to the people who have participated in the Finance Committee work Christy Savage, Emma Beauchamp, Daria Ivanochko, Sharon Rowan, Kate Richard, and Kira Caceres.



# Nelson House 2023 AGM

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8. Presentation and Acceptance of the Financial Statements
9. Appointment of Auditors for the 2022-2023 Fiscal Year.



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# Nelson House 2023 AGM



## 10. Resolution to Approve the Board Slate

### **Two Year Term**

**Kira Caceres**

**Jessica Legrand**

**Maggie Patterson**

**Kate Richard**

**Rachel Steele**

### **One Year Remaining in a Two-Year Term**

**Linda Bianchi**

**Carolyn Elizabeth**

**Carol Gervais**

**Daria Ivanochko**

**Danika Nieuwkoop**

# BREAK – back in 10 minutes



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“Leaving (Nelson House) was bittersweet.”

“My kids thrived in the shelter.”      “It was scary, terrifying, to start again.”

“It felt like my home.”

“When I arrived here I was shy, but all of them helped me...now I am not shy, I am really happy.”

“My awareness of domestic violence has increased.”      “I know I will need to set and reinforce boundaries.”

“I feel powerful and ready.”

« l'aide que j' ai recu etait au delas de ce que j'attendais je dis un gros ,merci

“Without their help, this process would be a lot harder for me and my children.”

“Je remercie beaucoup ce foyer qui m'a donné de l'aide m'a accueilli et m'a appris à m'aimer moi même et à avoir confiance en moi. »

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# Her Story

# Nelson House 2022 AGM

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12. Thank you to board members and staff who have retired.

**Paramjit Bahniwal**

**Sharon Rowan**

**Tanya Singhal**

**Emma Beauchamp**

**Kimberley Byers**

**Tara DiBenedetto**

**Uzma Khan**

**Lisa Kirbie**

**Saweena Seth**

**Deka Hersi**



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## 13. Fundraising

Ways to support Nelson House

Follow us on all our social media sites (landing page of website)

Come to an event- see events and initiatives

Help us with our prospect list (contact [volunteer@nelsonhouse.on.ca](mailto:volunteer@nelsonhouse.on.ca))

## 13. Adjournment



**Ontario**   
Ministry of  
Children, Community and Social Services



Thank you to  
our 2022-2023  
supporters