



# **NWT Disabilities Council**

## **Annual General Meeting**

Thursday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Bakers Centre Main Hall at 6:30pm





September 18<sup>th</sup> 2014 at 6:30 – 8:00PM  
Bakers Community Centre Main Hall, YELLOWKNIFE, NT

**AGENDA**

1. Welcome, Call to Order by NWT Disabilities Council Board Chair, Mr. Cornelius Van Dyke
2. Blessing by Cecilia Wood
3. Opening Presentation from the Minister Responsible for Persons with Disabilities Glen Abernethy
4. Approval of Agenda
5. Adoption of 2013 Annual General Meeting Minutes
6. Business arising from the last year's A.G.M.-No business arising from 2013 AGM
7. Keynote Address - Mr. Xavier Canadien
8. Board of Director Officer Reports
  - 8.1 Chairperson Report - Mr. Cornelius Van Dyke
  - 8.2 Treasurer Report - Ms. Terry Hawkins
  - 8.3 Executive Director Address - Ms. Denise McKee
9. New Business -
  - 9.1 Bylaw changes - Mr. Cornelius Van Dyke
    - i. *Current: **Membership II 1.1***: Full members are any resident in the NWT willing to further the goals and objectives of the Council  
*Change: **Membership II 1.1***: Full members are any resident of the NWT willing to further the goals and objectives of the Council and  
*Add: **Fees III 4*** An annual membership may be purchased on any date throughout the year but will expire at the end of the calendar year purchased
    - ii. *Current: **Board of Directors V3***: To be eligible for election or appointment to the Board of Directors, a person must be eighteen years of age, a resident in the NWT, and a current Full member of the Council  
*Change: **Board of Directors V3***: To be eligible for election or appointment to the Board of Directors, a person must be eighteen years of age, a resident of the NWT, and a current Full member of the Council
    - iii. *New language addition: **9 Board Internal Complaints and Sanctions***  
**9.1** Any concern or complaint regarding a Board member's conduct or status must be made in writing and presented to the Board of Directors for consideration **and** Change current numbering **9.1 to 9.2**
    - iv. *Current: **Annual General Meeting VIII 2*** The secretary shall notify all members in writing of the Annual General Meeting at least 14 days prior to the date of the meeting.



## NWT Disabilities Council

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*Change: Annual General Meeting VIII 2* the secretary shall notify all members in writing of the Annual General Meeting at least 14 days prior to the date of the meeting. Electronic notification is acceptable

9.2 Establishment of Member Fees - Mr. Cornelius Van Dyke

9.3 Nominees presented for election - Ms. Adelle Shea

9.4 Election for Board of Directors - Ms. Adelle Shea

9.5 Presentation of Electoral Board - Ms. Adelle Shea

10. Date of Next Annual General Meeting - September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015

11. Adjournment of Meeting

Please stay to chat and have light refreshments.

## AGM BOARD MEETING MINUTES

1. **Call to Order** -Board Meeting called to order by Board Chair, Don Gillis – September 19, 2013 at 7:10pm
2. **Blessing**- **Cecilia Wood**- Cecilia presented the blessing in English and Dogrib
3. **Opening Remarks** –Deputy Minister –GNWT /HSSA, Debbie DeLancey gives opening remarks.
4. **Attendance is attached/ Approval of Agenda**

<b>Additions /changes</b>
No additions or changes
<b>Motion:</b> Motion to accept the Agenda
<b>1<sup>st</sup>:</b> McDonald, Ben
<b>2<sup>nd</sup>:</b> McKee, Neil
<b>Passed:</b> All say yeah. Motion passed

5. **Adoption of 2012 AGM minutes –**

<b>Additions /changes</b>
No changes
<b>Motion:</b> Motion to accept the minutes
<b>1<sup>st</sup>:</b> McKee, Neil
<b>2<sup>nd</sup>:</b> Shea, Tyler
<b>Passed:</b> All say yeah. Motion passed

6. **Business Arising from 2012 AGM** – none to report
7. **Keynote Address-** Accessibility: On the Land. Mr. Bill Burles
8. **Board of Director/Officer Reports-** Package attached

✚ Board Chair-Board Chair report given by Mr. Don Gillis

<b>Motion:</b> To accept the Board Chair's Report
<b>1<sup>st</sup>:</b> Van Dyke, Cor
<b>2<sup>nd</sup>:</b> Sharp, Judy
<b>Passed:</b> All say yeah. Motion passed

✚ Treasurer- Treasurer's Report and audit information delivered by Terry Hawkins

<b>Motion:</b> To accept the Treasurer's Report and Audit for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2013, as prepared by SVS Group LLP Chartered Accountants and to accept SVS Group as the auditor for the next fiscal year ending March 31, 2014
<b>1<sup>st</sup>:</b> Jacquard, Darren
<b>2<sup>nd</sup>:</b> Shea, Adelle
<b>Passed:</b> All say yeah. Motion passed

✚ Executive Director- Denise Acknowledged the presence of Nathalie Nadeau, Director from Yellowknife Health and Social Services. E.D. Report delivered by Denise McKee, Executive Director

<b>Motion:</b> To accept the executive director's report
<b>1<sup>st</sup>:</b> McKee, Alannis
<b>2<sup>nd</sup>:</b> Shea, Tyler
<b>Passed:</b> All say yeah. Motion passed

**9. New Business**

**9.1 Acknowledgement of Exiting Board Members**

Denise thanked exiting Board members: Sharon Oldford, Judith Wright-Bird, Raymond Massey and Don Gillis

**9.2 Presentation by Nomination Committee-**

Adelle Shea presented the nominees with bios, for Board members

**9.3 Election of Nominees**

<b>List of Nominees :</b> Bill Burles, Barbara Clement , Susan Dauphinais, Alannis McKee, Judith, Sharp, Cornelius Van Dyke, Cecilia Wood
No new nominees presented from the floor
<b>Ballot/election required : Yes      No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></b>
<b>If no: All nominees elected by acclamation: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</b>

<b>Motion:</b> to accept the nominees for appointment to the Board of Directors
<b>1<sup>st</sup>:</b> VanDyke, Cor
<b>2<sup>nd</sup>:</b> Burles, Jake
<b>Passed:</b> All say yeah. Motion passed

**10. Date of Next General Meeting:** September 18, 2013

**11. Adjournment of Meeting – Time :** 8:25pm

**Minutes Accepted:**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Board Chair** \_\_\_\_\_



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September 18, 2014

## **Board Chair Report** **2014 Annual General Meeting**

Welcome members, friends and supporters to the 2014 Annual General Meeting of the NWT Disabilities Council. I appreciate you taking the time to be here with us tonight. For those of you who don't know me, I am Cornelius Van Dyke, the current chair of the Board of Directors of the NWT Disabilities Council.

It has been a busy, challenging and exciting year for the NWT Disabilities Council. We have seen increases in all of our programs – from contacts through the 1-800 number to the number of students involved in learning support to the number of children in the experience summer program. You will hear more about each of the programs later tonight. Through the generous support of our sponsor organizations and financial contributors, our financial position is better even though we have served more clients and have supported more individuals. Again, there will be a more detailed financial report later tonight.

Our Executive Director, Denise McKee, and I continue to have meetings with senior government officials in an effort to secure a permanent location for the Council in the downtown core in order to better serve and support our clients. A permanent location has not become available but we have secured a 10-year lease on an accessible space in the Scotia Centre. Renovations to meet the council's office space needs are currently underway. By mid-October we will be serving our clients from this new space. Our long-term goal however continues to be securing a permanent home.

One of the purposes of the NWT Disabilities Council is to support people with disabilities. There are many types of disability – some are visible, some are invisible. Some you are born with, some develop during your lifetime. Sometimes they are the result of accidents. Statistics demonstrate that if you have a prolonged disability, there is a greater likelihood that you are unemployed or under-employed. Which is why we are excited to have recently partnered with the Department of Health and Social Services to provide programming for the Yellowknife Day Shelter. Individuals who come to the Shelter will have access to a safe, warm place to spend their daytime hours. Users of the Day Shelter will have access to support and referral services on site for public health. Through liaisons with community partners we will help facilitate employment readiness and employment. In conjunction with the Yellowknife Food Bank and Yellowknife Health and Social Services light food services will be provided. The Council will rely on its own resources, in conjunction with vested community partners, to increase services as required by individuals accessing the shelter. This is a new direction for the Council but we feel strongly that it will benefit both people with disabilities and the community.

[www.nwtability.ca](http://www.nwtability.ca)



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The Council depends on the generous financial and in-kind support of many private businesses and government departments for the income it needs to provide its many services to the people of the Northwest Territories. We supplement this income with fundraising in order to cover general administrative costs. Our major fundraising effort is the Benefit Auction which is held in November of each year to kick off the Christmas shopping season. Last November we held one of our most successful Benefit Auctions at the Yellowknife Inn, raising almost \$36,000.00. Planning is well underway for this year's auction on November 18<sup>th</sup>. Our winters are long, dark and cold. I urge everyone to break the cycle and come to the Yellowknife Inn for an evening of fun, excitement and good times.

In past years the Council has undertaken various events to raise its public awareness profile. Our popular Grand Prix event featuring home-built soap-box type racers and open to children from 7 to 12 years of age, was held on a bright, sunny Sunday on School Draw Avenue. Forty eight children participated and hundreds joined to cheer them on while enjoying music, a barbeque, good times and prizes. Congratulations to all the participants, thank you to all the sponsors - we hope to see you all again in June 2015.

Any organization is ultimately dependent on its employees and staff for not just the services it provides but also for the public persona of the organization. To both, our Executive Director, Denise McKee, and our staff I want to say thank you for a job well done. The NWT Disabilities Council continues to support, advocate and educate on behalf of people with disabilities across the Northwest Territories and, through our membership on national organizations, on behalf of people with disabilities across Canada. On a separate issue, I would like to congratulate Denise on having her abstract chosen for discussion at the International Short Break Association conference in Wolfenbuttel, Germany. The International Short Break Association is a worldwide organization dedicated to develop and promote best practice principles to best meet the respite/short break needs of individuals and families living with disability. Denise's abstract dealt with diversity in the delivery of respite services. Specifically, how to incorporate traditional knowledge and values to provide culturally appropriate, person-centered support.

The Board of Directors of the NWT Disabilities Council generally operates in the background, out of all the limelight and public attention. The Board's work however is important in providing direction and support to the staff. To current and outgoing Directors of the Board, please accept my sincerest thank you for all that you have done for the Council and for your support of people across the NWT who live with a disability or who support a person with a disability.

Thank you.





## **Treasurer's Report**

### **NWT Disabilities Council – 2014 Annual General Meeting For the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2014**

Good evening,

I would like to thank everyone for coming out this evening. By attending our annual meeting and various activities throughout the year you show commitment and dedication by supporting peoples with disabilities.

A special thanks goes out to Sophie Hatto, Erica Long and Susan Dalphinais, for their work on the Finance Committee and to Denise McKee for her assistance coordinating meetings and maintaining meticulous records.

I am pleased to advise the members of the NWT Disabilities Council that the Audited Financial Statements were issues, for a third year, by the NWT Disabilities Council's Auditor, SVS Group LLP Chartered Accountants out of Edmonton, Alberta in August 2014 for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2013 and ending on March 31, 2014.

SVS Group LLP Chartered Accountants, after reviewing the accounts has found that the NWT Disabilities Council financial accounting records to be in good standing.

The independent Auditor's Report (attached) stated that *"In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the NWT Disabilities Council as at March 31, 2014 and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles."*

Accordingly, the Auditor's report and financial statements can relied upon as true and correct financial statements by the members of the NWT Disabilities Council. Attached are the highlights of the 2013-2014 Audit Report.

The NWT Disability Council has continued to grow and with that has come increased fiscal responsibility. The Council will continue to meet new and exciting challenges in the next fiscal year.



**NWT  
Disabilities  
Council**

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In closing, I would like to acknowledge the significant assistance the Government of the Northwest Territories, the Royal Bank of Canada, the City of Yellowknife, Human Resource Development Canada, the Yellowknife Health and Social Services, Buffalo Airways and Canadian North Airlines have extended to the NWT Disability Council this year in helping us meet our financial challenges.

Thanks you so much.

Respectfully submitted by:

Terry Hawkins  
Treasurer

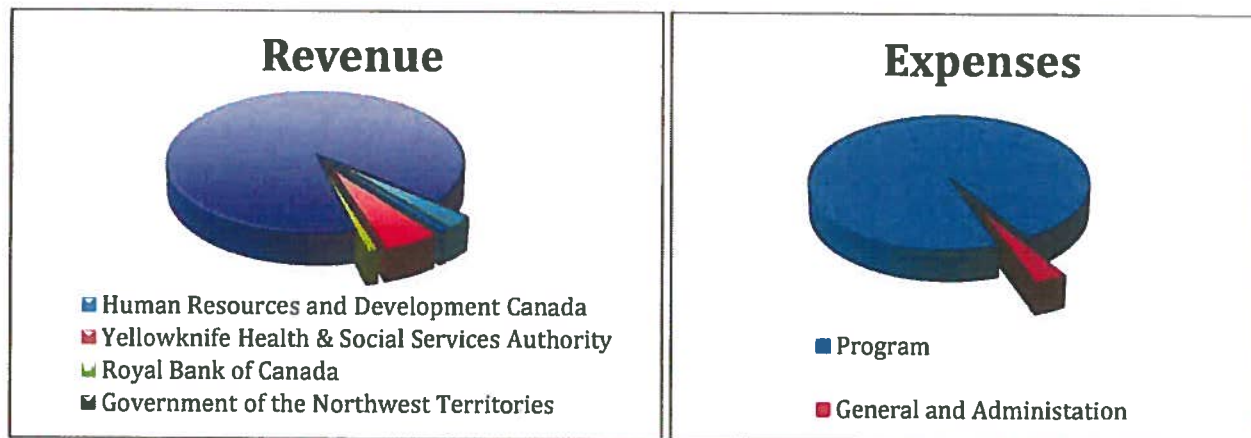


## Treasurer's Report

### NWT Disabilities Council – 2014 Annual General Meeting For the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2014

#### Key Highlights of the 2013-2014 Audit Report:

- Funding from the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) comprised 90% of the total revenue for the year ending March 31, 2014
- In the 2013-2014 fiscal year the total expenses increased to \$997,191 over the previous year's expenses of \$968,495
- Salaries and benefits increased to \$655,357 representing an increase over the last reporting period
- Year end assets at March 31, 2014 were \$171,515
- Year end liabilities at March 31, 2014 were \$87,968



Overall, the main sources of revenue remained stable during this reporting period and it is expected that they will continue to do so in the future.

Respectfully submitted,



Terry Hawkins  
Treasurer



## INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Members of  
**NWT Disabilities Council**

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We have audited the accompanying financial statements of **NWT Disabilities Council**, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2014 and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

### Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditors' judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditors consider internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

### Opinion

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of **NWT Disabilities Council** as at March 31, 2014 and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Edmonton, Alberta  
August 19, 2014

*SVS Group LLP*  
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

# NWT DISABILITIES COUNCIL

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT MARCH 31, 2014

	2014	2013
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Cash	\$ 98,927	\$ 53,742
Cash - Inuvik Chapter	19,338	12,727
Short-term investments (Note 3)	103,298	102,448
Accounts receivable	16,689	4,420
Prepaid expenses	4,126	4,613
Deferred expenditures	-	7,000
	<b>242,378</b>	<b>184,950</b>
<b>CAPITAL ASSETS (Note 4)</b>	<b>17,105</b>	<b>42,281</b>
	<b>\$ 259,483</b>	<b>\$ 227,231</b>

<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (Note 5)	\$ 45,379	\$ 45,256
Deferred revenue (Note 9)	42,589	53,251
	<b>87,968</b>	<b>98,507</b>

<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>INVESTED IN CAPITAL ASSETS</b>	<b>17,105</b>	<b>42,281</b>
<b>RELOCATION RESERVE (Note 8)</b>	<b>18,861</b>	<b>18,861</b>
<b>UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS</b>	<b>134,172</b>	<b>54,856</b>
<b>UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS - INUVIK CHAPTER</b>	<b>1,377</b>	<b>12,726</b>
	<b>171,515</b>	<b>128,724</b>
	<b>\$ 259,483</b>	<b>\$ 227,231</b>

**APPROVED ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director



# NWT DISABILITIES COUNCIL

## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2014

	2014	2013
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Program Revenue		
Community Outreach (Schedule 2)	\$ 44,570	\$ 44,570
Disability Awareness Week (Schedule 2)	10,767	9,282
Early Intervention Program (Schedule 2)	398,323	357,625
Summer Student Placement (Schedule 2)	34,195	34,434
Learning Support (Schedule 2)	100,000	81,691
Respite Program for Local Communities (Schedule 2)	212,500	212,500
Parking Placards (Schedule 2)	21,487	21,487
Information, Referral and Support (Schedule 2)	107,620	107,620
Inuvik Branch (Schedule 2)	15,639	-
Individual Community Respite Services (Schedule 2)	2,167	-
FASD Symposium Program Cover Contest (Schedule 2)	1,500	-
	948,768	869,209
General Revenue		
Donations	15,141	6,959
Membership and administrative fees	770	910
Fundraising and events	74,453	57,853
Interest income	850	679
	91,214	66,401
	1,039,982	935,610
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Program Expenses (Schedule 1)		
Salaries and benefits	655,357	607,197
Administrative fees allocated	28,103	24,497
Advertising and promotion	10,312	10,841
Professional fees	3,062	15,499
Bank charges	4,132	3,576
Office	15,143	15,888
Program materials and support	117,392	98,008
Travel	29,903	24,603
Rent	45,267	46,564
Insurance	5,457	4,952
Repairs and maintenance	13,542	331
Inuvik Chapter	10,585	9,611
Telephone	15,759	14,475
Training	9,146	9,129
	963,160	885,171
General and Administrative Expenses		
Advertising and promotion	3,270	3,445
Amortization	25,176	26,669
Bank charges and interest	66	524
Fundraising	1,847	3,469
Insurance	1,198	411
Training expenses - Inuvik Chapter	764	-
Office	10,628	8,083
Professional fees	-	10,061
Rent	5,644	4,608
Repairs and maintenance	1,282	2,759
Salaries and benefits	11,731	47,572
Travel	528	220
Less: Administrative overhead allocated to program expenses	(28,103)	(24,497)
	34,031	83,324
	997,191	968,495
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 42,791</b>	<b>\$ (32,885)</b>



# NWT DISABILITIES COUNCIL

## SCHEDULE 1: PROGRAM EXPENSES BY PROJECT NAME FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2014

	2014	2013
Strategic Planning	\$ -	\$ 9,977
Community Outreach	43,977	40,584
Disability Awareness Week	13,927	12,554
Early Intervention Program	389,871	337,324
Summer Student Placement	37,182	40,515
Learning Support	100,000	81,691
Respite Program For Local Communities	217,598	216,204
Parking Placards	21,869	21,689
Information, Referral and Support	108,845	115,022
Inuvik Branch	26,224	9,611
Individual Community Respite Services	2,167	-
FASD Symposium Program Cover Contest	1,500	-
	<b>\$ 963,160</b>	<b>\$ 885,171</b>

## Executive Director's Address to the AGM

I would like to begin by acknowledging the time and hard work, of the amazing team, that makes up the NWT Disabilities Council. Both the team members, that deliver service from a Yellowknife office, and the team members that deliver service in the communities. Through your dedication each of you makes it a pleasure for me to come to work each day. Next, I would like to offer a heartfelt thank you to all our Board members who provide the vision and support for the Council. Our Board president, Mr. Cor Van Dyke, is an inspiration to all of us. He is a leader who provides wisdom and direction tempered with humour. This Board provides an environment that breeds innovative and solution based thinking. Last but certainly not least, to all the volunteers, businesses, community members, other NGOs, all levels of government and supporters that in their own way, from volunteering time and in-kind donations to funding help us to reach our vision: Thank you, you are greatly appreciated.

As you have heard tonight, this past year has been incredibly busy. These past few years have been important toward building a strong foundation of service and we are now seeing the outcomes of this hard work. Our Children and Youth Programs; Early Childhood Intervention, Experience Summer and Community Respite have been overhauled to ensure each child/youth receives the best individually- centered planning. We have incorporated a philosophy of care that is built on integrated, wrap around supports. The Learning Supports for Persons with Disabilities has been revised and through increased awareness this program has supported more students, especially from our communities, to pursue post- secondary education than ever. In fact, this past year the funding was increased by 50% to support more students. However, as with all good things, when the integrity and reputation of a program grows so does demand. All of these programs had many individuals remain on waitlists for services, due to limited resources. We saw the bi-annual renewal of accessible parking permits for the Territories and continue to complete administration for the Yellowknife Accessible Transit System. Over the past three years, our Disability Awareness Week has grown from one dedicated week to a program which strives to bring awareness throughout the year. We have held Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder events, Spread the word to end the R-word campaigns, Light it up Blue events to raise awareness for Autism Spectrum Disorder, partnered with Best Buddies at École St. Patrick's High School to build inclusive schooling, Anti- bullying campaigns, Senior and youth events. We partner with other NGOs and groups, such as the M.S. Society to assist in their individual mandates and events. Through our Community Outreach and volunteers we have helped to support specific events such as; Tourette syndrome and mental health awareness. Through information, referral and support we have supported individuals in communities throughout the NWT with issues and concerns including; transportation, housing,



employment, education, health services and income support. We attend meetings; assist with forms, letters and applications. Through the direction of the people we support, their needs and their issues of concern, the Council frames its support and advocacy. The Council staff works diligently to find the services and solutions and when there doesn't seem to be one the team strives to come up with innovative ways to address the needs through individualized proposals directed to local health authorities. The Council works with groups and individuals to bring their knowledge and expertise to the table to enhance all solutions. At times the issues are straight forward and simple to address. At other times, as we have seen with the Day Shelter, these issues are far more complex and require complex and integrated solutions. In either instance the Council remains determined in its efforts to find resolutions that are successful and fiscally responsible.

The Council understands that the events it holds, both awareness and fundraising, do much more than their fundamental purpose. They build community partnerships and relationships that enhance its ability to deliver its services. For example our partnership with Canadian North has grown through the Benefit Auction and Grand Prix. This has created a relationship that has expanded to corporate discounts on travel and complimentary tickets. This allows us to go into more communities and more often. It allows us to have training that otherwise would not be possible. The Council expands its capabilities, we visit more communities and they become familiar with us. Our services and supports are accessed by more people each year. Another example is our relationship with the YK Inn for our Benefit Auction. What started as a corporate sponsorship has turned into a relationship which helps to direct employment opportunities from the YK Inn to people we support. These are only two examples but there are dozens more that show how the Council has made a concentrated effort to build its recognition, corporate confidence and in doing so has increase its capacity. Social media has also become a huge opportunity to expand our capacity. Through our website, facebook and twitter we are able to reach more people instantly. In fact we facebook and tweet about our events and topics on a regular basis, including tonight, #bestagmever

As we look ahead the Council looks forward to settling into our new office space downtown in the Scotia Centre. The location was chosen in response to the many requests we have received, over the last 5 years, to be back in the downtown core to allow for greater access to the people we support. We are extremely grateful to the GNWT Departments of Health and Social Services and Education, Culture and Employment for their support throughout our relocation.

In my fourth year as E.D. with the Council I have seen many changes. We continue to meet the goals in our Strategic Plan. We have financial stability, we have forged a much greater presence and built strong relationships in communities throughout the North, though we were not able to secure a permanent home we have a 10 year lease and we have focused on creating a

workplace that makes people want to stay even though we face many of the challenges that other NGOs face with staff retention.

I guess at this point we could give all round “pats on the back” and settle into the status quo but we understand that whatever progress has been made there are still mountains to cross. With changing demographics, less transiency, environmental impacts, better census and data collection, we recognize the number of people identified or self-identifying as having a disability will increase beyond what initial projections have indicated. It is now that we must begin to look at how we will meet the needs of these individuals, both young and old. We can no longer stand in our own box, do what we do, and not look to what others are doing around us. Innovative thinking and solutions must be at the forefront. This is not about job loss; this is about utilizing those jobs and people in a more efficient way to make every one of those dedicated professionals delivering service as productive as possible. We must be strong enough to have expectations.

To this end The Council will continue to advocate for increased resources to meet the concerns and needs as presented by the people we support. We will continue to work together with all parties to further these issues and will readily assist when requested.

The answer is in this room. The days of us versus them are gone because the solution will require all of us to work together. If you take a look around this room the decision makers are here. All of us, from government and organizations to concerned individuals. These are smart, dedicated people with the ability to come together for change and advancement. Make no mistake this will take hard work, a collaborative approach that is willing to ask tough questions, acceptance that there may be mistakes on the way to success and a willingness to open our minds and create change. It will have its critics, sometimes publicly, which will be difficult. As difficult as it may be it will require egos and politics to be checked at the door to allow people to perform. It will require courage, honesty and conviction. It will need passionate people on all levels but most importantly strong knowledgeable leaders. However, if our path is truly forged for the people that count: the people we support, their advancements will be the measure of our success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DMK', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Denise McKee,  
Executive Director.