



Making Kenora HOME

COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS
FOR HOMELESSNESS

ANNUAL REPORT 2014

HUB Executive

Diane Pelletier, Co-Chair
Dan Jorgensen, Co-Chair
Nan Normand, Secretary
Fay Clark, Treasurer
Don Denver
Freda Holmes
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Joel McGrath
Judy Underwood

Message From The Co-Chairs

We are entering our eighth year as an organization. In 2006 we set an ambitious agenda. There has been distance travelled. Some goals have been achieved and others have not, delayed by barriers that we knew would have to be overcome by committed action. At times we have experienced all that is good about Kenora. At other times we have supported each other against the ennui that encases long term issues. At no time have we been deterred.

In 2014 we remain focused on the goals set by our community. Affordable housing is now on the public agenda. The recent district and municipal consultations have heard the citizens of Kenora as they speak up for affordable, accessible and appropriate housing. Other organizations, including the Lake of the Woods Economic Development Commission and Kenora Substance Abuse and Mental Health Task Force, have stepped up to keep the issue before our public decision makers. The Kenora District Services Board is moving their Ten Year Housing and Homelessness Plan forward. The federal and provincial governments have renewed their commitment to the Homelessness Partnering Strategy. Awareness was our first strategic arrow. Action follows. Stay posted because

Guiding Principles

- ❖ **EQUALITY**
- ❖ **INCLUSION**
- ❖ **SHARING**
- ❖ **SELF DETERMINATION**
- ❖ **EMPOWERMENT**

"Kenora Cares"

Dan Jorgensen
CoChair

Diane Pelletier
CoChair

OBJECTIVE # 1

Promote Implementation of Recommended Housing Projects

1. **Full-time Emergency Shelter:** Despite the lack of core funding, the Fellowship Centre has managed



to remain open for yet another year. Because of a substantial funding reduction, hours had to be cut to balance the budget and allow continued daily access.

Despite a recommendation within the KDSB Ten Year

Housing & Homelessness Plan to reformulate shelter funding, the Fellowship Centre continues to wait for promises to be fulfilled.

2. **Eight Transitional Single Room Occupancy**

Units: The proposed construction of 8 transitional units for the chronically homeless remains unfunded. The Fellowship Center did sit up a pre-independent living centre in their basement which is occupied by 11 residents. Project Homefind has been funded by the Homelessness Partnering Strategy--Rural &

Remote Initiative. This project will develop transitional pathways to independent living and set up a homelessness community VI-SPDAT data base. The Problematic Substance Use



Initiative continues to operate their pilot program supported by a supportive housing worker and 8 housing subsidies. Although this project which is partnered by Community Mental Health Support Services /Kenora Association for Community Living and Lake of the Woods District Hospital Community programs/Morningstar Centre has been helpful, the lack of affordable units continues to impede the progression of citizens from homelessness to residency.

3. **Twenty Single Room Occupancy Units:**



No progress has been made towards the development of 20 SRO units. The municipal Homelessness & Behavioural Issues Task Force Work Plan

emphasized the need for active participation with

senior levels of government on affordable and supportive housing. Their recommendation that municipal incentives be offered to develop low income housing dovetails with the KDSB's need to partner for development of new affordable housing within their budgetary constrictions. The proposed Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw Review drafts do contain municipal incentives to encourage the development of affordable housing.

4. **Ten Single Dwelling Aboriginal Family Units:** Aamikkowiish partnered with the Kenora Affordable Housing Group to build 10 family homes under the FIMUR (First Nations Inuit Metis Urban Rural housing) program. The project was part of \$2.89 million local project awarded through the Ontario Aboriginal Housing Support Services Corporation. All are now occupied.



5. **Tax Discount/Credit and Utility Credit for Low-Income Seniors:**

There is limited local eligibility for LEAP (Low Energy Assistance Program) as well as a property tax increase deferral. We are currently investigating need for further assistance programs.

6. **Two Supportive Housing Units:** In a creative partnership, Pincrest is now providing fee for service assistance onsite for seniors within three housing complexes. Seven transitional housing units for women fleeing abusive relationships were also funded through the \$2.89 FIMUR project.



7. **Rent Subsidization:** The Ministry of Health has provided rent subsidization for 4 individuals experiencing mental health dysfunction and 4 whose mental illnesses have brought them into conflict with the justice system. There have been an additional 2 subsidies to private landlords through KDSB out of the 13 that they manage regionally. The 2014 extension of Investment in Affordable Housing funding is an opportunity for expansion of rent subsidies as well as builds.

8. **Revolving House Trust:**

Fundraising for the second Habitat for Humanity (Kenora Chapter) build has begun and construction is expected to begin in summer 2015. Six other home ownerships were funded in 2010 through FIMUR.



Making Kenora Home has continued to participate in housing consultations at all levels of government.

OBJECTIVE # 2

Community Caring Projects

Week of Action Against Poverty. This year's theme, *Small Actions/Big Spirits*, deepened individual commitments. The *Focus on Food Security Resources* workshop mapped local services, developed a community report and formed an association for further collaboration. Fundraising for the emergency shelter



and food security programs was undertaken by schools, legal aid and clinic staff, and health unit staff. The cold winter spurred several groups including the Beaver Brae grade 10 civics class and hospital staff to contribute winter clothing to the Kenora Fellowship Centre.



Joining the students in taking action was the Kenora Senior's Coalition who did a telephone tree to advocate for the needs of low income cardiac patients. Local businesses also contributed including Keystone Lock & Safe

who donated door locks and installations for the upcoming Habitat build and Crossfit who donated the chicken dinner to Helping Hands. The traditional activities, People First's Red Ribbon Campaign, Wear Red Day and Prayers from the Pulpit continued to encourage community awareness and action.



Hunger Doesn't Take A Vacation. Friendly competition between emergency service groups spurred Stuff A Boat donations up to a monthly total of \$2636.31 and \$960 kg of food. The August campaign also



provided over 400 Saturday meals at the street picnics. The diners enjoyed the diverse musical entertainment organized by Carolyn Hudson and her colleagues. Teams of volunteers eased the service and donations



kept down food costs. BDO's market gleaning project again brought in heaps of fresh vegetables and baking thanks to the generosity of the Farmer's Market vendors. Volunteers picked up unpurchased stock and distributed to local food banks following each market day.



Summerfest. Fifteen service agencies and 150 neighbourhood residents attended the fifth annual Minto Summerfest held on July 30th, 2013. Again live music set toes tapping while children played games, ate carnival food and tried out the Circus Kids activities. The



OPP and volunteers flipped burgers while the Fire Department gave tours of their shiny red truck.



Participants joined their neighbours in good fun, practical learning activities and networking resources. It is an opportunity for neighbourhood development that is appreciated by residents and service providers.

Kenora Food Resources Group.

The funding cutbacks to the Fellowship Centre increased the need for emergency food resources. Many individuals and groups stepped forward to try to fill the gaps. Coordination of these efforts was undertaken by Making Kenora Home. The facilitation of local emergency food providers workshop led to the creation of a coordinating network that directs volunteers and donations to more effective resourcing.

OBJECTIVE # 3

Community Awareness and Education

Gingerbread Lane. This year's tea with its creative display of gingerbread houses raised awareness of homelessness, brought camaraderie to the participants and doubled funds raised for the Kenora Fellowship Centre's Christmas Sharing Circle. Entertainers

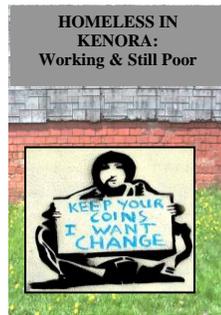


brought music to lift spirits at the event. Volunteers kept the coffee cups refilled, handled the baking sales and ensured that the children's activity corner was a fun holiday destination for families. St. Marguerite Bourgeoys students expanded on the *Bird Deserves A Home (and so do people)* theme. Students decorated bird houses which were sold to raise money for the Kenora Fellowship Centre.

Newsletters & Pamphlets Three newsletter editions were published and distributed by email and print editions throughout the community. In addition, nonpartisan pamphlets were prepared for both the provincial and municipal elections to encourage citizens to consider affordable housing issues in preparation for placing their votes.



Working and Still Poor The seventh book launch in the Homeless in Kenora series focused on citizens who are working and struggling with the cost of shelter. The excitement of obtaining work is quickly doused by the reality of minimum wage, precarious employment. The family stories were of particular interest. The rate of children under the age of 6 who are living below poverty line is 40% higher than the provincial rate. The cost of public education emerged as parents spoke of fees and supplies being pulled out of budgets already depleted by the cost of accommodations and utilities.



The Poverty Challenge This year's "Walk in Our Shoes" challenge featured two families who broadened community understanding of the daily struggles of those who survive on social assistance. The main blog page recorded over 500 views and progress was followed by both local and regional media. The local cable station aired an hour long interview with the family participants.



Facebook Page. Social networking has become a key tool in Making Kenora Home's communications strategy. Membership in this online community has increased by 133% in the previous year.

Web Site. Our web master, Karen Sinclair, continues to effectively manage our web site. www.makingkenorahome.com includes events, research, publications and a direct newsfeed on federal and provincial housing matters. All booklets and reports are downloadable.

Media Interviews

- o Radio 10
- o Television 5
- o Newsprint 24
- o Web-based News 16



Financial Report

Making Kenora Home Charitable Services Inc. Statement of Revenues and Expenditures Year Ended December 31, 2013	
Income	
Received Donations	\$ 185.00
Non Received Donations	629.00
Other Revenue	
Interest	4.00
Total Income	\$ 818.00
Expenses	
Interest & Bank Charges	35.00
Office	
Donations	
Program Expenses	541.00
Professional Fees	565.00
Total Expenses	\$1,141.00
Deficiency of Receipts Over Expenses	(\$323.00)

Membership & Volunteerism

Contact

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468-8888

Making Kenora Home Statement of Changes in Net Assets Year Ended December 31, 2013	
Net Assets-Beginning of Year	\$ 3,704.00
Deficiency of Receipts over Expenses	(323.00)
Net Assets-End of Year	\$3,381.00