

AFS BOARD OF DIRECTORS' REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING – MINUTES

Wednesday, October 23, 2024

5:00 pm

Virtual – MS Teams & In-Person



ATTENDANCE

AFS BOARD MEMBERS:	William Johnson, Chair James Agnew Dan Swystun Megan Bernard	Jane Omollo Patricia R. Lofstrom Lucia O'Connor Wes Lavergne	Dania Kuzbari Jennifer Geenen Rick Hamilton
REGRETS:	David Petersson		
STAFF/LEADERSHIP:	Ali Juma Stephanie Fetherston Brian Kelly	Arlene Smith Natalie Young Jacob Bruzas	Obianuju Fadijo Melissa Brockelbank

MINUTES

1.0 Quorum

Quorum established.

2.0 Constitute Meeting

2.1 Call to Order

The Board Chair calls the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

2.2 General Welcome

The Board Chair welcomes everyone to the meeting, both in-person and online.

2.3 Land Acknowledgement

The Board Chair provides the land acknowledgement.

2.4 Declaration of Conflict of Interest

No conflicts of interest declared.

3.0 Presentation

Deferred

4.0 Agenda & Minutes

4.1 Approval of Agenda

MOTION

BIRT, the board approves the October 23, 2024, Public Board Meeting agenda as presented.

Moved by: Rick Hamilton

Seconded by: Patricia R. Lofstrom All in

favour. CARRIED.

4.2 Approval of Minutes

MOTION

BIRT, the board approves the September 25, 2024, Public Board Meeting Minutes as presented.

Moved by: Dania Kuzbari

Seconded by: Megan Bernard All in favour. CARRIED.

4.3 Business Arising from Previous Minutes

No business arising.

5.0 Consent Agenda

MOTION

BIRT, the board approves the October 23, 2024, consent agenda as presented.

Moved by: Patricia R. Lofstrom

Seconded by: Jane Omollo All in favour. CARRIED.

6.0 Items Removed from Consent

No items removed from consent.

7.0 New/Ongoing Business

7.1 Intimate Partner Violence – Update

Stephanie provides an update highlighting the following:

- AFS partnered on four different gender-based violence proposals of which three were provincial and one was regional.
- Provincially, one of the proposals put in is a 211, where men can call about relationship issues and partner violence. Second, is the group for men, which is an early intervention initiative to enable men attend to how they treat their partner - it is a psychoeducational group with an evidence-based approach. Third, is the couples counselling called “Hold Me Close”, which is an emotional therapy that enables couples to work on mending their relationship.
- Regionally, there is a proposal led by Thunder Bay for a knowledge-sharing hub that will be a resource to organizations in Northern Ontario.

Other Business

i. Committee Meetings

The Chair reminds the board of directors to endeavor to attend committee meetings, as the Services and Advocacy Committee Meetings have been cancelled for the last two consecutive months due to a lack of quorum.

ii. The New Northern Mentality Board Invitation

The New Northern Mentality has invited the board to attend a dinner event on Monday, October 28, 2024, at 6:00 pm.

8.0 CEO Report

8.1 Ali Juma provides the CEO Report as provided in the board package.

9.0 Board Committee Updates

No update

10.0 Adjourn to In-Camera

MOTION

BIRT, the board moves to adjourn to the in-camera segment of the meeting at 5:37 pm.

Moved by: Rick Hamilton
Seconded by: Patricia R. Lofstrom All in favour. CARRIED.

11.0 Resume Regular Public Board Meeting

MOTION

BIRT, the board moves to resume the regular public board meeting at 5:58 pm.

Moved by: Dania Kuzbari
Seconded by: Patricia R. Lofstrom All in favour. CARRIED.

12.0 Accept Motions Made In-Camera

No in-camera motions

13.0 Adjournment

MOTION

BIRT, the board moves to adjourn the regular public board meeting at 5:59 pm.

Moved by: Megan Bernard
Seconded by: Dan Swystun All in favour. CARRIED.

14.0 NEXT MEETING

- Next Regular Board Meeting November 27, 2024 @ 5 PM

Submitted by: Obianuju Fadijo, Executive Assistant



CEO Report

October 23, 2024

Happy month of giving thanks! We hope you enjoyed a wonderful Thanksgiving! At AFS we have much to give thanks for! First and foremost, we give thanks to you our Board of Directors for your unwavering support of AFS! We are excited for the reveal of our new strategic plan at our Annual General Meeting, and we are so appreciative of the time and consideration you have given in the development of this plan. This is our most ambitious strategic plan to date! The AFS team is up for the challenge and to build on all the great success from our last strategic plan! On that note, I have some great updates for you that include a big jumpstart on our new strategic plan!

In keeping with our efforts to recognize the diversity in our community, in the Board Teams folder, you will find the new DEI Newsletter created by our EDI Committee. This newsletter contains information on the days of recognition this month and other information on our activities. We welcome your feedback!

Investing in Our Awesome Team

On October 10th, 25 staff participated in training with our community partners on A Brain-Based Approach for Parenting Kids with Vulnerable Nervous Systems and Big, Baffling Behaviors. This training was provided by Robyn Gobbel. Find her background here <https://robbygobbel.com/about/>

On October 17th, Mitch Lepage from Predictive Success provided in-person training to the Leadership Team on creating job profiles based on the Predictive Index suite of tools. For more information on Predictive Success find it here <https://www.lepageimpact.com/the-predictive-index-1>

This week members of our Garden River Wellness Team are attending an Addictions and Mental Health Ontario (AMHO) conference in Toronto. As well, we have two staff participating in the Student Nutrition Conference, also in Toronto.

On the recruitment front, we had another Counsellor resign to join the Algoma District School Board. Across our sector, this is becoming more and more a reality, as staff leave for better paying jobs. On October 17th our provincial associations, launched the *For Us, For You* campaign, to close the wage gap. This campaign is calling on the Government for the following:

- Invest over \$500 million each year over the next five years to close the wage gap, in addition to sustainable and ongoing annual increases in line with projected inflation;
- Address Bill 124 shortfalls that continue to impact the community health sector; and
- Establish a working group with the government to develop a sustainable approach to building and supporting the community health sector workforce.

For more information on the campaign find it here <https://familyserviceontario.org/2024/10/17/community-health-sector-launches-campaign-profiling-staffing-challenges-and-impact-to-patient-care/>

The Compressed Work Week pilot launched on October 1st, with the majority of staff electing for two remote days a month versus working four longer days and taking a day off. Approximately 30% of staff opted to stay with their current work schedule. While another 30% were excluded from the pilot due to the nature of their work, such as our Care and Treatment Counsellors who work in the schools.

Reconciling our Truth

On October 12th, Sherry Beaton, Kim Cavanagh, Clinton Snider, with our partners on the FASD Council held the annual FASD Family Wellness Retreat at Hiawatha. Incorporating Indigenous approaches to wellness, the over 40 participants engaged in land-based activities, including a drumming ceremony to open the day. The day closed with a workshop held at the Quattro. This great event was made possible through Health Nexus funding awarded to both AFS and THRIVE!



Level Setting

On October 22nd, Dr. Leeno Karumanchery, of MESH Inc, the company conducting our DEI Assessment and capacity building training, provided a feedback session with the Senior Leadership Team on the assessment survey conducted earlier this year. The

results showed areas of strength and identified two areas for growth which include Team Climate and Everyday Validation. You will find a copy of the survey results in your Board Teams Folder.

On October 18th, the EDI Committee hosted a Fall Harvest Potluck. The food was so good Arlene forgot to take pictures! It is wonderful we can have this celebration of culture!

Finding a Better Way

I am very pleased to share that our Counselling and Therapy Waitlist now sits at 52 persons waiting for service, a significant drop from over 170 at this time last year. The team continues to make great progress with a 28 person reduction from my last report. To celebrate this significant accomplishment, I will be treating the team to lunch, and welcome members of the board to join us. Uju will confirm the dates with you.

For the first time since the pandemic, our Single Therapy Session Walk-in Clinic returns to in-person services this week! I am so pleased we are finally delivering this much demanded service in person. A shout out to Sue Bryden, Clinical Manager and Stephanie Fetherston, Senior Director of Services for their work with our community partners in re-establishing the in-person service. Until now, this service was being provided virtually.

The HART's Hub proposal was submitted on October 20th. We thank Brenda Clarke for her work with the committee on completing the proposal. Find an article here <https://www.sootoday.com/local-news/saults-bid-for-addictions-homelessness-hub-is-a-long-shot-9601841>

Connecting the Dots, Closing the Gaps

On October 11th, I had the privilege of presenting with Kim Slade, the Executive Director of Awesome Music Project (AMP), to 25 potential donors at the WaterTower Inn on how this program would benefit not only the youth at the hub but all of our children and youth at AFS. The AMP is a music therapy program that runs for 8 weeks. It is facilitated by a musician supported by staff to teach kids music and to tell their stories. More like creating music to support the stories. Find out more info here <https://www.theawesomemusicproject.com/>



The mission for AMP is to “Make life better through Music. After the presentation, Margaret, Brian Kelly, and I attended a performance at the Art Gallery of Algoma, Friday evening. This performance sponsored by the Algoma Arts Council featured Sarah Slean and Rob Carli. Rob is the founder of the AMP. Here we witnessed the impact of the AMP as four people told their stories and Sarah and Rob played music connected to this story. Sarah Slean is an accomplished singer and musician winning many Canadian awards. Rob Carli is most known as the musical producer for the Canadian television show, Murdoch Mysteries.



On October 13th, the AMP team held a workshop for 25 youth to experience the program at the Art Gallery of Algoma. A shout out to Emily Tremblay, Brenda Clarke, and Margaret Tuomi, for working with Donna Hillsinger and the AMP staff, for bringing this program to our community. We look forward to seeing how this program will evolve in finding another way to improve the mental health of our children and youth through music.

On the service front, we anticipate seeing an increase in demand with the return of students to school. Those numbers will be revealed in the November services report. For the month of September our service volume was consistent with this same time last year with the exception of the incredible progress the Counselling and Therapy Team have made in reducing the wait list for service.

On the Youth Hub front, we celebrated our 3000th visit this month! An incredible accomplishment considering we opened in January of this year!. We are so proud of the Youth Hub team including the Youth Action Council for the success of the Hub. Our hope is to appear before City Council this year to provide an update on the Hub.

With regard to the NRAC program, we will be providing a tour of the hub with the ADSB Director of Education. We hope to extend the educational support offered to youth justice clients at the hub to also include youth who are suspended or on an individual learning program to come to the hub for this support. It is a matter of convincing the school boards on this vision, and having resources allocated to the hub.

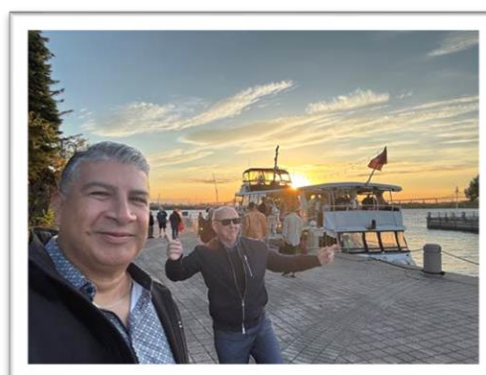
With respect to the Cafe4Good, a delay in permitting is holding up the opening. The readjusted opening date will be in November. Speaking of permitting, the installation of the elevator has been held up, and now we may have to wait until the spring.

On the LIT front, this month we discharged our fourth, fifth and sixth resident. Two planned, and the other self-discharged. With these discharges, we welcomed two new residents, leaving us with four residents in total with two beds vacant at this time. The complex needs of our new admissions have us holding on any new admissions until these youth stabilize in the program.

We congratulate our Community Wellness Bus partners for being awarded the Community Builders Award! Find the article here <https://www.sootoday.com/local-news/community-builders-awards-this-health-organization-is-a-lifeline-of-care-and-compassion-for-saults-most-vulnerable-9634678>

Such a great recognition for this much-needed service. I am happy to share thanks to the efforts of the CMHA, DSSAB, and SAH in obtaining and providing funding we will be getting a new Wellness Bus! The previous bus was a repurposed decommissioned ambulance that had a host of issues. This new bus (van) will better serve our staff in serving others. A media release will go out tomorrow about the new bus.

A shout out to Lucia O'Connor and Brian Kelly, who joined me on October 12th in the Making Waves Charity Cruise event, sponsored in part by AFS. Participants chose where the proceeds would be donated to, and Women in Crisis was chosen as the beneficiary. A great time was had by all, groovin to the disco music of the 70s!



On a final and somber note, our board meeting falls on the anniversary of the tragic loss of life of a mother, and three children due to IPV. On October 21st, a *Voices for Violence* rally was held at the Roberta Bondar Pavillion. AFS supported this event with an information booth, along with our community partners. Find the article on this event here <https://www.sootoday.com/local-news/mental-health-issues-causing-much-of-domestic-violence-in-the-sault-murder-victims-father-9687773>



Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Ali Juma'.

Ali Juma,
CEO

AFS EDI NEWSLETTER

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

OCTOBER 2024

ADHD AWARENESS MONTH
BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH
WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH
LATIN AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH
GERMAN HERITAGE MONTH
CANADIAN ISLAMIC HERITAGE MONTH

OCTOBER EVENTS:

CLICK ON THE LINKS FOR DETAILS

October 3: 5-7pm

- [YWH Queer Café Hangout](#)

October 4: 7pm

- [Oktoberfest: Under the Tent](#)

October 4: 5:30-7:30pm

- [YWH Cooking and Craft with S.O.Y.A.](#)

October 10: 5-7pm

- [YWH Neurodivergent Teen Night 16+](#)

October 13: 11am-3pm

- [Festival of Colours](#)

October 18: 12-1pm

- [EDI Fall Harvest Potluck](#)

October 18: 4pm

- [Soo Zombie Walk](#)

October 25: 6-9pm

- [YWH Halloween Party](#)

EDI SIGNIFICANT DATES:

CLICK ON THE LINKS TO LEARN MORE

October 1:

[National Seniors Day](#)

October 10:

[World Mental Health Day](#)

October 11:

[Yom Kippur begins](#)

October 16:

[International Pronouns Day](#)

October 18:

[Persons Day](#)

October 2:

[Rosh Hashanah begins](#)

October 11:

[National Coming Out Day](#)

October 14:

[Thanksgiving Day](#)

October 16:

[Sukkot begins](#)

October 31:

[Halloween](#)

October 4:

[National Day of Action for MMIWG2S](#)

October 11:

[International Day of the Girl Child](#)

October 15:

[Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Day](#)

October 17:

[International Day for Eradication of Poverty \(UN\)](#)

October 31:

[Diwali/Deepavali](#)

