

AFS BOARD OF DIRECTORS' REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING – MINUTES

Wednesday, February 26, 2025
5:00 pm
Virtual – MS Teams & In-Person



ATTENDANCE

| | | | |
|---------------------------|--|---|---|
| AFS BOARD MEMBERS: | William Johnson, Chair James Agnew Patricia R. Lofstrom Dan Swystun | Rick Hamilton Lucia O'Connor David Petersson | Dania Kuzbari Wes Lavergne Megan Bernard |
| REGRETS: | Jane Omollo | Jennifer Geenen | |
| STAFF/LEADERSHIP: | Ali Juma Stephanie Fetherston Natalie Young Melanie Hyde | Arlene Smith Jacob Bruzas Lisa Guzzo Kelly Wallace | Obianuju Fadjo Brenda Clarke Shelagh Ewing Heidi Byman |

MINUTES

1.0 Quorum

Quorum established.

2.0 Constitute Meeting

2.1 Call to Order

The Board Chair calls the meeting to order at 5:03 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

The Birth to Six Program provides a presentation on the program as provided in the board package.

4.0 Agenda & Minutes

4.1 Approval of Agenda

MOTION

BIRT, the board approves the February 26, 2025, Public Board Meeting agenda as presented.

Moved by: Patricia R. Lofstrom

Seconded by: Rick Hamilton All in favour. CARRIED.

4.2 Approval of Minutes

MOTION

BIRT, the board approves the January 22, 2025, Public Board Meeting Minutes as presented.

Moved by: James Agnew

Seconded by: David Petersson All in favour. CARRIED.

4.3 Business Arising from Previous Minutes

No business arising.

5.0 Consent Agenda

MOTION

BIRT, the board approves the February 26, 2025, consent agenda as presented.

Moved by: Patricia R. Lofstrom

Seconded by: Dan Swystun All in favour. CARRIED.

6.0 Items Removed from Consent Agenda

No items removed from consent agenda.

7.0 New/Ongoing Business

7.1 Policy Review for Accreditation

The Chair stated that the working group, consisting of Rick, Wes, Chair, Brenda and Natalie will review the date options provided by Brenda to determine when to meet. The meeting will be in-person.

7.2 District Board Meetings – Poll Results

The Chair reviews the poll results with the board members. The consensus is that the district board meeting will be scheduled for June 20th by 6:00 pm at Elliot Lake. The board meeting will be streamlined to accommodate the meet and greet with AFS staff and locals in the Elliot Lake community, which will begin at 7:30 pm.

7.3 50/30 Challenge – Poll Results

The Chair stated that the 50/30 challenge poll results shows that composition of the board is diverse. Patricia noted that there is no category for francophone representation on the board or leadership level. Ali stated that since we are registered on the roster for organizations that have signed up for the 50/30 challenge, we could inform them of our observation.

7.4 Committee Quorum – Terms of Reference (TOR) Amendments

MOTION BIRT the Terms of Reference for the Governance Committee, the Services and Advocacy Committee and the Finance and Operations Committee are amended as follows:

- i) Composition: A minimum of four (4) directors, including the President.
- ii) Quorum: 50% plus 1 of voting members; for clarity the President, notwithstanding ex officious status, shall be considered a voting member and count toward quorum; the chair of the committee is a voting member but does not get a tie breaking vote.

Moved by: Rick Hamilton

Seconded by: James Agnew All in favour. CARRIED.

7.5 Skill Board Matrix/Summary

The Chair asks the board members to provide a brief bullet point background of their skills and expertise so as to update the skills matrix document.

7.6 Board Assessment Feedback

The Chair provides a summary of the phone call interview of board members feedback or observations of the board. Natalie will develop a survey so that the board members will vote on regarding what should be prioritized for immediate implementation.

7.7 Website Transparency

The Chair reviews the website transparency document, which outlines comparisons amongst other agencies in regard to board resources published on websites. The chart provided by Emily shows that AFS has more board items than other agencies. Wes recommends that we publish the AGM minutes on the website. Ali recommends that the operational plan be added to the website.

7.8 Fremlin Quote – 205 McNabb Paint Renovation

Jacob stated that the painting renovation at the McNabb office has been long overdue. The request is to have the 1st and 3rd floor painted. Seven quotes were received and due diligence was followed during the quote selection process. The painting must be completed by 31 March, 2025.

MOTION BIRT the Board approves the award of contract to Daniel J Fremlin Group in the amount of \$47,403.00 inclusive of HST for painting 1st and 3rd floors at 205 McNabb Street.

Moved by: Rick Hamilton

Seconded by: Dania Kuzbari All in favour. CARRIED.

7.9 Amendment of Spending Limit in Policy FA-0015

Jacob noted that they are recommending the amendment of limit for the CEO to \$50,000, Director of Finance to \$30,000, the President of the Board to \$70,000, and any amount above will require board approval. This is to improve efficiency as things have become expensive to remain at the current

spending limit. Additionally, this would prevent delay in project executions if they would have to wait until the board meeting.

MOTION BIRT the Board approves the amendment of policy FA-0015 to increase spending limit approval by Director of Finance to \$30,000.00, increase the spending limit approval by CEO to \$50,000.00, and increase spending limit approval of the President to \$70,000.00, with any approval for spending over \$70,000.00 to be made by the full Board.

Moved by: David Petersson

Seconded by: James Agnew All in favour. CARRIED.

8.0 Purchase of Vehicle - Sienna

MOTION BIRT the Board approves the purchase of 2025 Toyota Sienna AWD 7 passenger vehicle from Northside Toyota in the amount of \$68,222.30 inclusive of HST and fees.

Moved by: Rick Hamilton

Seconded by: Dania Kuzbari All in favour. CARRIED.

8.0 CEO Report

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

- AFS sponsored the ACCANO event in the amount of \$1000 and paid for a table in support of the Black History Month celebration.
- The Lunch Date with paint was held at the McNabb office whereby some staff members engaged in painting to celebrate black history month
- We will be renovating the McGregor board room approximately \$20,000
- Senior Leadership Team approved the purchase of 36 chairs as we received a higher discount as a result.
- The compressed work week survey showed a decline in indirect services, however, the response rate was low. Another survey will be conducted at the end of the pilot to determine its success. If otherwise, we may revisit it at the next year's negotiations.

9.0 Board Committee Updates

9.1 Governance Committee Chair Report

The Committee Chair, Wes advised board members to review the report as provided in the board package.

9.2 Services and Advocacy Committee Chair Report

The Committee Chair, Patricia provided an overview of the committee minutes and advised the board members to review the report as contained in the board package. Ali stated that there will be shared costs among partner agencies for the recruitment of a third psychologist.

10.0 Adjourn to In-Camera

MOTION

BIRT, the board moves to adjourn to the in-camera segment of the meeting at 7:01 pm.

Moved by: Patricia R. Lofstrom

Seconded by: Dan Swystun All in favour. CARRIED.

11.0 Resume Regular Public Board Meeting

MOTION

BIRT, the board moves to resume the regular public board meeting at 7:59 pm.

Moved by: Patricia R. Lofstrom

Seconded by: James Agnew All in favour. CARRIED.

12.0 Accept Motions Made In-Camera

MOTION

BIRT, the board moves to accept the In-Camera motion

Moved by: Patricia R. Lofstrom

Seconded by: Dan Swystun All in favour. CARRIED.

13.0 Adjournment

MOTION

BIRT, the board moves to adjourn the regular public board meeting at 8:00 pm.

Moved by: David Petersson

Seconded by: Rick Hamilton All in favour. CARRIED.

14.0 NEXT MEETING

- Next Regular Board Meeting March 26, 2025 @ 5 PM

Submitted by: Obianuju Fadjo, Executive Assistant

0 – 6 Children's Mental Health Services

Kelly Wallace

Melanie Hyde

Shelagh Ewing

Heidi Byman, BSW Student

Michael Sanderson, Administrative Support

Lisa Guzzo, Clinical Manager



Presenting Concerns

- Complexity of presenting issues (in no particular order):
 - Trauma
 - Abuse
 - Neglect
 - Attachment
 - Adoption
 - Separation and Divorce
 - Anxiety



- Grief and Loss
- Verbal and Physical Aggression
- Custody and Access
- Addictions (past or present)
- Parental Recognition and/or Acceptance of Diagnoses/Issues/Treatment
- Sleep disturbances
- Poverty
- Blended Families



- Encopresis/Enuresis
- Low Self Esteem
- Peer/Sibling Conflict
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Sensory Sensitivities



- Environmental Issues

- Living with domestic violence
- Lack of basic needs i.e. food, clothing
- Chronic pest infestations i.e. bed bugs, fleas, scabies, lice, etc.

- Child Development

- Non-verbal
- Inability to express thoughts and feelings



- Relationship Building
 - Relationships need to be present before therapy can begin
 - Mistrust of adults
 - Insecurity and inability to use their “voice”
- Other service provider demands



Services Provided

- Single Therapy Session
- Initial Assessments
- Home Observations
- Day Care/School Observations
- Parent Child Interaction Assessments
- Referrals – Internal and External
- Treatment plans (goal setting)



- Individual, Group, Family Counselling
 - Play Based Therapy
 - Attachment Based/Parent Interaction
 - Trauma Focused CBT
 - Social Skills Training
 - Parenting Education and Support



- Groups – Taming Sneaky Fears, PASTA (Parenting a Second Time Around), Children of Divorce Intervention Program (CoDIP), Social Skills and IRIS Group (Infant Loss Support Group)
- Ages and Stages Questionnaires
- Case Management and Advocacy



- Consultations and collaboration both internal and external; Algoma Public Health, THRIVE, Child Care Algoma, Algoma District School Board and Huron Superior Catholic District School Board



How to Refer to Us

- No Wrong Door
- Parent/guardian self-refer

The Process

- Single Therapy Session
- Intake
- Initial Assessment and assignment



Questions?





CEO Report

February 26, 2025

As we bring February to a close, it has definitely been a busy month of great celebrations like Black History Month, Valentine's Day, and Family Day! Today is Pink Shirt Day, an annual event celebrated in Canada on the last Wednesday of February to raise awareness about bullying and promote kindness and inclusivity. The movement began in 2007 when two high school students, David Shepherd and Travis Price, organized their peers to wear pink in support of a fellow student who was bullied for wearing a pink shirt. This act of solidarity has since grown into a global movement, encouraging people to take a stand against bullying and foster a culture of empathy and respect.

AFS was pleased to sponsor the African Caribbean Canadian Association of Northern Ontario's (ACCANO) Black History Month Celebration on Saturday, February 22, 2025. In addition to our sponsorship, AFS purchased a table and invited members of the board, leadership team, and DEI committee to join in on the celebration. The President of ACCANO, Dave Mornix, expressed his gratitude for our sponsorship and participation. He publicly acknowledged our sponsorship at the event. We were treated to a great evening of music, song, culture, and food. Next year we hope to have more board members join in on this celebration. A special shout out to Dania and Jane for their participation in this event. To bring Black History Month to a close at AFS, the EDI Committee held its first "Lunch Date with Paint" event today. Participants were treated to Jamaican patties and juice while creating a work of art.



Despite all the great celebrations, it has been a challenging month with the pending tariffs and the provincial election campaign. These external factors have created an atmosphere of uncertainty, impacting our planning and operations. We remain committed to navigating these challenges with resilience and adaptability, ensuring that our services and support for the community continue uninterrupted.

On that note, I have a great report to share with you.

Reconciling our Truth

I am pleased to report that, by invitation from Algoma CAS, 20 of our staff members will participate in Cultural Competency Training. This training will be conducted by Marlene Syrette, an Indigenous Knowledge Keeper, and will focus on the blanket ceremony. The training sessions are scheduled for April 28 and May 3, 2025, with 10 staff members attending each session.

The blanket ceremony, also known as the KAIROS Blanket Exercise, is a unique, interactive, and participatory history lesson developed in collaboration with Indigenous Elders, knowledge keepers, and educators. It covers over 500 years of history, focusing on the experiences of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. Participants walk on blankets representing the land and assume the roles of Indigenous peoples, reading scrolls and carrying cards that determine their outcomes as they navigate through pre-contact, treaty-making, colonization, and resistance. The exercise concludes with a debriefing session, conducted as a talking circle, where participants discuss their experiences, process their feelings, and deepen their understanding of the shared history between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

This training aims to enhance our staff's cultural competency, fostering a deeper understanding and respect for Indigenous knowledge, beliefs, and values. We are grateful for the opportunity to participate in this meaningful exercise and look forward to the insights and growth it will bring to our team.

Level Setting

I encourage the board to review the AFS DEI Calendar contained in the Board Folder to stay informed about our ongoing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives and events.

On the DEI capacity front, I am pleased to announce that the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has approved Phase 2 of our work with MESH. This phase represents a significant step forward in advancing our DEI efforts at AFS. The key components of Phase 2 include:

1. DEI Committee Support:

- For the Project Term, MESH will provide support to Algoma's DEI Implementation team. This support involves a monthly checkpoint with the committee prime(s) to review execution plans and progress to date, discuss issues and concerns, and provide recommendations on the path forward.

2. Hiring and Retention Practices:

- MESH will work with the head of talent to review and reshape hiring and retention programs and practices, making use of the MESH Insights Engine available as part of the MESH platform subscription detailed in Appendix A.

3. Inclusive Leadership Program:

- Algoma will be provided with 15 additional licenses to the Inclusive Leadership module of the Mesh Diversity Intelligence™ platform, bringing the total number of licenses to 23 (8 were purchased under the Phase 1 DEI service package). The subscription includes personalized assessments and dashboards and access to virtual sessions conducted by Dr. Karumanchery, all supported by eLearning modules available on demand in the platform.

4. Company-wide Access to DEI Learning Modules:

- Algoma will receive a company-wide license to the Diversity Intelligence training package available in the MESH Diversity Intelligence™ platform under a separate

subscription as detailed in Appendix A. This subscription includes access to virtual live sessions offered on a quarterly cadence, including Diversity Intelligence Overview, Allyship, and The Minoritized Experience. The platform subscription will also include access to the integrated online learning lab and eLearning modules that support the live session content.

The cost of this phase is \$31,500, which is a valuable investment in our commitment to fostering an inclusive and equitable workplace. By partnering with MESH, we are equipping our team with the tools and knowledge necessary to create a more inclusive environment, enhance our hiring and retention practices, and develop inclusive leadership skills across the organization.

These initiatives are crucial for advancing our DEI goals and ensuring that AFS remains a welcoming and supportive place for all employees and clients. We are excited about the progress we are making and look forward to the positive impact these efforts will have on our organization.

Investing in Our Awesome Team

We are pleased to announce the completion of the flooring installation at our McNabb office on the 1st and 3rd floors. The new flooring looks great and certainly brightens the office environment. With this work complete, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has approved the next phase of renovation, which includes painting the 1st and 3rd floors. The cost of this work is approximately \$47,403.00. As this amount exceeds my purchase limit, it will be presented to the board for approval. Several quotes were obtained, and this quote is being brought forward by the Director of Finance and Administration with my approval.

With the arrival of our new Director of Finance, a review of our spending approval limits was prompted. At the upcoming board meeting, we will be bringing forward a motion to approve an increase in the CEO's spending approval limit to \$50,000, the Board President's limit (on behalf of the board) to \$70,000, and the Director of Finance and Administration's limit to \$30,000. Any approvals over \$70,000 will be brought forward to the board for approval. These spending limits were set prior to my arrival in 2015. Since then, the agency's revenues have significantly grown, as have the costs of procuring goods and services. Adjusting these spending limits will reduce the bottleneck of having the board approve expenditures between \$30,000 and \$70,000, allowing the board to focus on significant expenditures while streamlining the approval process for smaller amounts.

In addition to the painting, I have approved a refresh of the third-floor McGregor meeting room. This will involve reconstructing a west-facing wall that once served as a cash kiosk. The wall currently has a metal roller door that compromises the sound barrier of meetings held in the room. The opening will be drywalled, the room will be repainted, and the furniture will be updated, including AV equipment. The cost for this renovation is approximately \$20,000 all in.

Furthermore, the SLT has also approved the purchase of 36 new office chairs, replacing chairs that some staff claim are older than they are! This much-appreciated purchase will cost approximately \$15,000. The procurement of chairs follows our COVID-19 protocols of ensuring wipeable surfaces.

These renovations and the purchase of office chairs are part of our ongoing efforts to create a modern, comfortable, and efficient workspace for our team. We believe that investing in our physical environment is crucial for enhancing productivity, morale, and overall well-being.

Finding a Better Way

Speaking of well-being, this month, we conducted a mid-point survey on the compressed work week (CWW) pilot. We achieved just over a 50% response rate, which is lower than we had hoped. Interestingly, staff reported a lower rate of productivity with regard to indirect service compared to the initial survey. This data seems counterintuitive given that research on CWW indicates an increase in productivity. It also raises questions about the productivity of staff who opted to pilot two remote workdays a month, as indirect service tasks are to be completed on these remote days.

Indirect service hours refer to the time spent on activities that support direct service delivery but do not involve face-to-face interaction with clients. Indirect service hours can include tasks such as case documentation, report writing, supervision, training, and administrative duties. We will be reviewing these results at our next leadership team meeting to try and isolate causation for the decrease in indirect service productivity.

Connecting the Dots, Closing the Gaps

We are thrilled to share the success of our very first youth forum all-candidates meeting, held at the Algoma Youth Wellness Hub. This event provided a unique opportunity for youth to engage directly with candidates vying to become Sault Ste. Marie's next Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP). The forum featured NDP candidate Lisa Vezeau-Allen, Arnold Heino of the New Blue Party, and Gurwinder Dusanjh of the Liberal Party of Ontario. Over the course of two hours, the candidates answered the questions posed by the youth and discussed their respective party's solutions on issues such as affordable housing, opioid death rates, and the quality of education.

The event was moderated by Arwen Cooke of the Youth Advisory Council and saw about 30 attendees. A key highlight was the discussion on the long-term plans for the Youth Wellness Hub project, emphasizing the importance of ongoing funding and support. The forum was a testament to the power of youth voices in shaping the future of our community. It was truly incredible to see the youth fully engaged for the full session.

A special shout out to Board President Bill Johnson for his participation in this event, as well as our community partners, the Executive Director of Algoma CAS, and Melissa Sventsson from THRIVE Child Development Services. Their support and collaboration were instrumental in making this event a success. Additionally, a big thank you to the Youth Wellness Hub Team for their fast work in pulling this event together, especially considering the election is on Thursday. We look forward to continuing to provide platforms for youth engagement and advocacy in our community. Find the SooToday article on the forum here <https://www.sootoday.com/2025-provincial-election-news/local-youth-get-their-chance-to-question-provincial-candidates-10280796>

The following reflects a high-level summary of the Senior Service Director, HR Director, and CSSI Director reports. For the full reports please find these in the Board Teams Folder, including the Services Demand Report, prepared by the Director of Business Analytics and Continuous Improvement.

Community Services and Strategic Initiatives:

- **Algoma Youth Wellness Hub:**
 - January 2025 = 391 total visits, including 42 new visitors, 96 Indigenous youth, and 20 newcomers.

- The Youth Advisory Committee is planning activities for the winter/spring and aims to create a youth action plan for the next fiscal year. Safe Food Handling and ASIST training opportunities will be promoted on social media and through community partners.
- **Virtual Youth Wellness Hub:**
 - Pleased to announce Paige Linklater was the successful candidate for the new Youth Hub Supervisor.
 - Meetings with the YWHO Provincial office are ongoing to discuss next steps, including an in-person planning session in Toronto.
- **The New Northern Mentality:** The group is exploring the needs of young people and planning fundraising for the Disable the Label conference in July 2025.
- **Family/Youth Advisory Committee:** Plans are in place to focus on two parent-specific events this year, one during Children's Mental Health Week in May and another in the fall. These events aim to attract parents interested in participating in the FYAC group.
- **Rebound North:** The team will deliver 4-5 PreVenture Groups online throughout the winter and integrate this programming into the Youth Hub options.
 - Rebound Jr and Senior programs continue with weekly evening groups and classroom programs in schools.
- **Student Nutrition Program:**
 - Enhanced funding has been provided to schools, ensuring programs can continue through June 2025.
 - Eighteen snack programs have been upgraded to morning meal programs, providing three food items.
- **Supervised Access Program:** The program is operating at near capacity with several new families beginning services in the last month.
- **French Language Services:** AFS is awaiting news on funding to enhance FLS services, specifically to update the website.
 - The Administrative Assistant Team is participating in Basic French classes and using their new skills in daily communications.
- **Accreditation 2026:** Bill will be reaching out to Board members to begin reviewing the Board-related accreditation standards.

Human Resources:

- **Staff Complement:**
 - Total headcount is 198, with 13 student interns and 179 unionized staff.
 - Active recruitments: Community Development Facilitator, and various counsellor roles. Two new hires:
 - Amanda King (Child and Youth Care Practitioner, Casual/Relief)
 - Tania Gagnon (Acting Live-in Care Supervisor, Temporary Full-Time).
- **Training and Development:** Negotiation Skills training for the HR Director and Mental Health training for the HR Associate.
- **Staff Recognition:**
 - Guy Chartrand, Intake, for 30 years of service
 - Emma Roberts for 5 years of service.

Senior Director of Service:

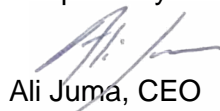
- **Provincial Training Initiative and Other Trainings:** The Counselling and Therapy team is starting to use Greenspace with families, with the Intensive Treatment Services team to follow.
- **Family and Adult Services Team:** The VAW (Violence Against Women) waitlist is decreasing, currently at about 2. The FAST team is running various groups, including Pathways to Healing, Art Expressions, PAR for men, and Dedicated Dads. The Anti-Human Trafficking team is conducting presentations and workshops in Wawa and Timmins.
- **Ontario Structured Therapy Team:** The team has started using Care Dove to book appointments, allowing new clients to book their own appointments. There have been some initial challenges, but it is expected to be beneficial once fully implemented.
- **Counselling and Therapy:** The waitlist has started to increase due to staff leaves and shortages. Efforts are being made to develop new groups to address the waitlist and enhance current offerings. Current waitlist at 70+ up from a low of 51.
- **Collaboration and Partnership:** A third psychologist, Dr. Jenna Thompson, has completed her year of supervised practice and is now fully licensed. Community partners, including Nogdawindamin, CLA, THRIVE, and CAS, are working together to fund her position.
- **Privacy Breaches and Complaints:** No privacy breaches or complaints have been reported since the last report. There have been 11 Serious Occurrences since the last report.

In conclusion, February brought both celebration and challenge for AFS. We proudly supported Black History Month events and advanced our DEI efforts. Despite uncertainties from pending tariffs and the provincial election campaign, we remain committed to resilience and adaptability. The advancement of our DEI efforts with MESH highlights our dedication to fostering an inclusive and equitable workplace. Additionally, the completion of flooring installation and approval for further renovations at our McNabb office demonstrate our ongoing investment in creating a modern and efficient workspace.

We also celebrated a significant accomplishment with our first youth forum all-candidates meeting, providing a platform for youth engagement and advocacy. Service innovations, such as staff using Care Dove and Greenspace, are enhancing our service delivery. As we conclude the compressed work week pilot in March, we will analyze the results to determine the best path forward, aiming to increase productivity and improve mental health through flexible work options as a recruitment and retention strategy.

As we enter March, a month of observance for many religions, we wish all those who observe a Happy Ramadan, Easter, Holi, Purim, and Nowruz. We look forward to the outcome of the provincial election and its implications for our community. With the arrival of spring, we anticipate a month of renewal and growth, focusing on creating a supportive and productive environment for both our employees and clients. We are excited about the positive impact these efforts will have on our organization.

Respectfully submitted by,


Ali Juma, CEO

AFS BOARD OF DIRECTORS – GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, February 19, 2025
12:15 pm
Microsoft Teams – Virtual



ATTENDANCE

AFS Board of Directors: ☒ Wes Lavergne ☒ James Agnew ☒ Megan Bernard

AFS Staff: ☒ Ali Juma, Chief Executive Officer ☒ Obianuju Fadjo, Executive Assistant ☒ Brenda Clarke, Director, Community Services & Strategic Initiatives

Youth Representatives:

Regrets: William Johnson

MINUTES

1.0 Quorum

Quorum established.

2.0 Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 12:16 pm.

3.0 Review of Agenda

The committee reviews the agenda as presented.

MOTION

BIRT, the committee approves the February 19, 2025, agenda as amended.

Moved by: James Agnew

Seconded by: Megan Bernard

All in favour.

CARRIED.

4.0 Approval of Previous Minutes

The committee reviews the minutes as presented.

MOTION

BIRT, the committee approves the September 18, 2024, minutes as presented.

Moved by: Megan Bernard
Seconded by: James Agnew

All in favour. CARRIED.

5.0 New Business

a. 50/30 Challenge Poll

The Chair reviews the poll result of the following board composition of twelve board members:

- With regards to gender, it is 50% male (6), 42% female (5) and 1% non-binary (1)
- Sexuality: 92% heterosexual (11), and 8% 2SLGBTQ+ (1)
- Disability: 8% disability (1) and 92% have no disability (11)
- Race: 75% Caucasian (9), 8% Indigenous (1), 8% Black or African Canadian (1), 8% Middle Eastern (1)

The Chair stated that the composition of the AFS Board is impressively diverse considering the small size.

b. Terms of Reference

Currently, Per Bylaw #1, section 8.05 - President is ex officio of all committees. The wording in the Bylaw is silent on voting rights of the President.

Per Terms of Reference, CEO is ex-officio. Terms of reference indicate that CEO is non-voting. The Terms of Reference are silent on whether President can vote. Assumption, silence = right to vote, as the CEO is specifically excluded.

Committees:

- No less than 4 directors appointed by the Board.
 - Requires change as President not appointed.

Quorum

- 50% + 1 of those entitled to vote.
- Chair to cast vote if a tie

MOTION

BIRT, The Terms of Reference for the Governance Committee, Finance Committee, and Services and Advocacy Committee of AFS be amended to reflect the following changes:

i. Composition: A minimum of four (4) Directors, including the President.

ii. Quorum:

1. 50% + 1 of voting committee members.

2. For clarity, the President, notwithstanding ex-officio status, shall be considered a voting member and shall count toward quorum.

b. Executive Committee

i. Composed of Board Officers only – no change necessary.

Moved by: Megan Bernard
Seconded by: James Agnew

All in favour. CARRIED.

c. Skills Matrix/Board Summary

The skill summary has been used in the past to provide background information about the board members. It is an internal document, although similar to the information on the AFS website but more detailed. We will be asking board members to update their information by providing summary information in bullet points.

MOTION

BIRT, the committee moves to bring forward the skills matrix/board summary to the main board as a suggestion to update the records for internal use.

Moved by: Megan Bernard

Seconded by: James Agnew

All in favour. CARRIED.

6.0 Ongoing Business

a. Board Succession

No update

b. Presentation

The Birth to Six Program will be providing a presentation to the main board on February 26th. There are some programs that did not or have not had the opportunity to present. We will continue to utilize the program schedule as reference for future presentations.

c. Policy Review

In regard to accreditation, the Chair, Bill, Rick and Brenda will schedule a meeting in March to review the policies with the aim of ensuring the completion of the policy updates and having all the amended policies approved in May or June.

Brenda stated that she will be submitting everything to the Canadian Centre for Accreditation in August and therefore, the board policies should be completed before the summer break. She will assist the board members with the interview prep in the fall.

The committee recommends that the policy review be brought forward for discussion at the February 26th board meeting.

7.0 Standing Items

a. 2024 Upcoming Tasks – Board Work Plan

No active upcoming task

b. Website Transparency – Review of Emily's Chart Summary

The Chair reviews the chart summary provided by Emily on comparisons of things published on other organizations' websites. Comparably, AFS has more publications, which includes board list, pictures of directors, bios of directors, meeting schedule, board meeting minutes, Governance Committee meeting minutes, Services and Advocacy meeting minutes, board policies, annual report, audited financial statements, strategic plan.

The Chair recommends that the AGM minutes be published on the website, and it is approved by the committee members. In regard to the operational plan, only 50 percent have it published – AFS does not currently publish operational plans on its website.

The Chair proposed that this agenda item be brought to the main board for discussion.

b. Youth Advisory

The Youth were engaged in several seasonal events such as the Santa Claus parade. The youth met in January to brainstorm about the next steps. They will be meeting in February to discuss what they would like to engage in for the Children's mental health week so that they can take advantage of Trillium funding that is geared towards youth specific initiatives. We received an equity grant from the Youth Wellness Hub Ontario to help deliver training for youth that will equip them with occupational skills like, customer service workshop, food safe handling, health talk, CPR. The youth are planning another Pride Prom in June.

8.0 Other Business

No other business

9.0 Next Meeting

March 19, 2025

10.0 Adjournment

MOTION

BIRT, the committee moves to adjourn the meeting at 12:41 pm.

Moved by: Megan Bernard

Seconded by: James Agnew

All in favour. CARRIED.

Submitted by: Obianuju Fadijo, Executive Assistant

AFS BOARD OF DIRECTORS – SERVICES AND ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, February 20th, 2025
5:00 pm
Microsoft Teams – Virtual



ATTENDANCE

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|---|
| AFS Board of Directors: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patricia R. Lofstrom (Chair) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jennifer Geenen | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dania Kuzbari <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lucia O'Connor <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> William Johnson | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jane Omollo <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rick Hamilton |
| AFS Staff: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ali Juma, CEO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stephanie Fetherston, Senior Director of Services | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brenda Clarke, Director Community Services & Strategic Initiatives | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brian Kelly, Senior Director of Services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Obianuju Fadjo, Executive Assistant |

Youth Representatives:

Regrets:

MINUTES

1.0 Quorum Established.

2.0 Call to Order

Patricia R. Lofstrom calls the meeting to order at 5:01 pm.

3.0 Review of Agenda

MOTION BIRT the Committee reviews and approves the February 20, 2025, agenda as presented.

Moved by: Rick Hamilton
Seconded by: Jennifer Geenen

4.0 Review Previous Minutes

Moved by: Jane Omollo
Seconded by: Rick Hamilton

5.0 New Business

a. Restructuring of agenda items to reflect the new strategic priorities

The Chair stated that the current agenda template was restructured to align with the new strategic priorities, however, there were some challenges with determining what items would come under “Reconciling our Truth”. Ali mentioned that what we would capture under “Reconciling our Truth” are activities that advance truth and reconciliation – we will capture our work in the indigenous space. For example, Dr. Hayes will be providing a presentation on Ontario Autism Program (OAP) in conjunction with Garden First Nations at our all-staff meeting in June. Additionally, the committee’s role would be to encourage the leadership to advance the organizational duties towards truth and reconciliation efforts.

Jane suggested including any partnership work with the indigenous communities. Ali mentioned that we are collaborating with the Children’s Aid Society (CAS) in doing cultural competency training with a blanket ceremony, which is an avenue to learn the indigenous culture. In regard to “level setting”, AFS has sponsored ACCANO with \$1000 and paid for a table in support of the Black History Month event. Jane also proposed adding the land acknowledgement as an item, whereby each committee member can personalize the standard template to reflect how each person identifies with the land acknowledgement.

Dania proposed that Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiative be included as a standing agenda item under “level setting”. Lucia stated that regarding “reconciling our truth”, she would like to see a broad view of all that the agency has engaged in to support the indigenous initiatives and future plans. Ali noted that the teams are working on their service plans with regards to the strategic priorities and once completed, would be consolidated into the operational plan. The operational plan will provide a guideline as to what the service teams identified as priorities and will be presented to the committee.

6.0 Standing Items

a. Investing in our Awesome Team (formerly Awesome Team)

i. *Service Demand Report*

Stephanie provides a summary of the service demand report and highlighting the following:

- The waiting list for Counselling and Therapy has grown due to an increase in referrals – which is common during this period. There are some staff that are on leave, which has contributed to the slowdown in tackling waitlists.
- In regard to Care and Treatment, we amalgamated two programs in the Parkland, which cater to the younger people because of low referrals.
- Psychology – we took in a psychologist to support her supervised practice. She has completed the supervised practice and can now practice independently. We are glad that she will be staying in Sault Ste. Marie. Although we do not have the funding to keep her, we are in the process of finalizing partnerships with THRIVE, Child and Development Centre, NOGDAWINDAMIN, Community Living Algoma, and Children’s Aid Society to fund the position because the North has a shortage of psychologists.
- Rainy River Partner Assault Response (PAR) will be moving away from AFS as they have found a local provider.
- On March 4th, there will be a service provider event for all the mental health providers in Elliot Lake.

ii. *Community Services Update*

Brenda provides a summary of the Community Services report. Highlights include:

- We have finalized the recruitment of the Community Services Supervisor for the virtual Youth Hub. The successful candidate is Paige Linklater, who has been the AFS Foundation Manager.
- The youths will be interviewing the candidates at the Youth Hub on Monday, February 24th. The NDP and Conservative candidates have confirmed their attendance. The full details of the interview will be sent to the board.

b. Finding a Better Way (Extraordinary Service)

i. Complaints

Stephanie stated that we received a complaint about a possible privacy breach, but it appeared to be a misunderstanding. The situation was resolved amicably.

Serious Occurrence

We have had eleven serious occurrences since the last report. A majority of the SO is due to missed medications.

ii. Lead Agency

The Ontario Intensive TP has significant investment by the government for intensive treatments such as our Live-in Treatment. We decided not to apply for funding because it has to be expended by 31st of March as it may not be feasible while we are undergoing licensing.

Another priority is closing the wage gap, which is the central focus of the lead agency and associations and hoping the government can help close the wage gap.

iii. Accreditation

Brenda will be scheduling some tentative dates to meet with the board members to review the policies so that the board members can reapprove and resign off on the documents by May and anticipating that during the fall, the focus would be on coaching the board in preparation for the accreditation interviews.

iv. Ontario Health Team (OHT)

Ali mentioned that next Friday, February 28th, the lead agencies will be meeting to discuss the structure of the OHT and its advancement. It will be the fifth year of its existence. However, there are some uncertainties about the future of OHT due to the upcoming elections. An update by the OHT Director will be added to the Board Teams folder. Ali has invited Bill to attend and extends the invitation to the committee members.

The approval of the HART Hub is a significant development, and the next step is working towards operationalizing the program. Stephanie noted that at the last OHT meeting, they discussed sending out surveys to the WAWA area of mental health and addictions to gather information from clients regarding gaps in services.

c. Connecting the Dots, Closing the Gaps (Busting Barriers)

i. New Funding and Initiatives/Partnership Updates

Brenda stated that the Ontario Trillium Foundation has opened its capital grant stream again and she will be submitting another application because the previous application for an elevator at the Youth Hub was denied due to limited available funding.

d. Level Setting

i. French Language Service/Culture Linguistics

Brenda noted that she has not received any feedback regarding the outcome of the funding application to facilitate AFS to become a French designated agency. However, she did receive a request to modify the application regarding French language translation on the website.

ii. Youth and Family Engagement

Benda mentioned that the team will be trying something different at the children's mental health week this year. The team are planning to have a parent specific event to attract parents to attend through special speakers, or topic to build new members for the youth and family engagement.

e. Reconciling our Truth

This has been discussed under the new business.

7.0 Ongoing Business

a. Review Terms of Reference

The Chair advised the members to review the terms of reference to familiarize themselves with the role of the committee and to discuss how the work of the committee fits into the board work plan.

8.0 Other Business

9.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourns at 6:05 pm.

MOTION BIRT the Committee adjourns the meeting at 6:05 pm.

Moved by: Rick Hamilton

Seconded by: Dania Kuzbari