
ANNUAL REPORT

ALICE HOUSING

APRIL 1, 1998 –
MARCH 31, 1999

Agenda

Annual General Meeting
Thursday, August 19, 1999
6:00 - 8:00 pm

1. Welcome
2. Review of Agenda
3. Motion to Approve Minutes from Annual General Meeting on June 29, 1998
4. Report of Co-Chairs
5. Tendering of Reports
 - Nominating
 - Alice Works
 - Executive Director
 - Personnel
 - Finance
 - Art Auction
 - Fundraising
6. Motion to Approve Reports
7. Motion to Approve Auditors
8. Royal LePage Presentation
9. Motion to Adjourn

Background Information

Alice Housing is a non-profit, second stage housing and support program for women, with or without children, who are leaving abusive relationships. The housing aspect of our organization involves the management and maintenance of 17 apartment units, located throughout metro. The support program aspect of our organization involves offering counseling, court support, outreach and other support services for the women of Alice Housing.

Alice Housing was founded in 1983 as a result of a housing shortage in metro. At that time, many women who were living in transition houses had no option but to return to the violent homes they had left, putting their lives and the lives of their children at risk. Alice Housing was formed to support women making the transition from emergency shelters to permanent, independent homes.

Mission

Alice Housing offers hope for women and children to begin a new life away from family violence, by providing a safe and supporting community as they rebuild their lives.

Philosophy

Alice Housing believes that every person has the right to live without fear of physical, psychological, emotional or sexual abuse; that all people should have equal opportunities to develop their potential and live full and rich lives; that children have the right to grow up without terror and without fear from the very people who are supposed to protect them from harm; and that all people have the right to decide for themselves the direction their lives will take, according to their personal values and needs.

Objectives

- 1) To provide a safe, non-judgmental environment for women leaving abusive relationships, with or without children, who have identified their own need for ongoing support and counseling.
- 2) To empower women to reclaim their lives so they may develop their potential to live full and rich lives, according to their own personal values and needs.

Co-Chairs Report

Alice Housing is experiencing growth. This is mainly because of a close working relationship between our Executive Director, Rosemary Brennan, Program Assistant, Nadine Naas, and our Board of Directors.

Our Board is currently involved in reaffirming our commitment to Alice Housing's women and children. We are protecting Alice Housing's assets so that we may be true to that commitment.

A new, updated computer system is in place; fire prevention and education have been stepped up to ensure maximum safety for the houses, as well as Alice Housing's office on Queen Street.

The Maintenance Agreement is close to being finalized; I move that we have a proper send off for the pager. Rosemary Brennan, Angie Giammario and myself have been holding down the fort in this area.

Due to the financial challenges faced by Alice Housing, we were forced to restructure the organization. This meant that staffing had to be reduced to save costs. Both the co-director of administration and the office manager were laid off. The tasks of staff and the needs of the organization were assessed. It was determined that the Program Director would become the Executive Director and a new position would be created in order to deal with the financial crisis. This position, determined by the Restructuring Committee, would require the candidate to have a BA degree preferably with a public relations background. The skills needed include: a high level of both written and verbal communication skills, fundraising skills, the ability to write communication plans and grant applications, strategic planning as well as supporting the Executive Director in the delivery of the program.

At this time I would like to comment on the bonding between the Board and staff. I feel that we are very strong, and fortunate to be able to support one another the way we do, in a dedicated, positive, affirmative manner.

We have a dedicated Fundraising Committee; our second art auction is coming together nicely for November 30, 1999. The Art Auction Fundraising Report is an indicator of the efforts put out by the women of this committee.

Lynn Brochu, Donna Gursky and Harolyn Wilson have resigned as Board members and we miss them. We wish them well.

Alice Housing continues to grow; we are very excited about the future. New areas of continuing support include: Royal LePage, Zellers, Department of Justice Community Mobilization Program grant, Superstore baked goods; all of these are contributing towards a healthier, happier future for the residents of Alice Housing.

Minutes of meetings for the past year are informative and accurate. To have further insight into what has been done in the past year, perusal of these minutes will answer any questions one may have.

Respectfully submitted,
Alice T. Crowley - Co-Chair - Board of Directors

Executive Director's Report

As I look back over the past year, I am struck by the challenges that Alice Housing has overcome. Alice Housing was in a very vulnerable financial state, had two new Co-Directors and a new Board of Directors. This last year has been a time of many changes for Alice Housing. Due to the financial crisis we had to restructure the staffing component of Alice Housing. We have gone from two Co-Directors and an Office Manager to an Executive Director and a Program Assistant.

To have a change in both staff and Board members has created many challenges, but also has brought new enthusiasm and commitment to Alice Housing. We have had our growing pains and struggles, but due to the dedication and hard work of the Board and staff, Alice Housing is once again beginning to thrive. Fortunately, Alice Works is excelling in all of their goals thanks to the dedication and long hours of Dawn Howell and the Alice Works Advisory Committee.

We have worked on increasing the awareness of Alice Housing in community, and the community response has been positive. This has been the year of firsts for us. This year Alice Housing started its 1st annual Mother's Day Appeal Campaign. Thanks to the hard work of Nadine Naas this campaign has been a huge success. As well as increasing funds, this increases Alice Housing's community awareness. We also hosted our 1st annual art auction, which was a huge financial success, and we are still getting positive feedback from the artists and people who attended the auction. This is the first year that Alice Housing has been invited to attend the grand opening of a department store and accept a donation of \$2,000.00 at the opening. Zellers has made a commitment to women and children and chose to present Alice Housing with a donation. This is also the first year Alice Housing has had a corporate sponsor who has made a commitment to support Alice Housing throughout the year. Royal LePage has chosen to support Alice Housing. As well as financial support, every second week a full-page ad runs in the Chronicle Herald, which states that Royal LePage is the proud sponsor of Alice Housing. This ad gives Alice Housing free advertising and helps the community become aware of Alice Housing and the services we offer. Through this increased awareness we have reaped financial benefits, as well as increasing resources for the families provided by community.

As Alice Housing has three different properties to maintain we regularly apply for grants to help with the maintenance of them. In the past year we have received a Shelter Enhancement Grant as well as funding from the Edwards Family Charitable Foundation. These grants help us keep the families in homes that are well maintained. As well as maintaining the properties, we need to keep the families safe. Presently all units are being installed with security systems. The equipment is on loan to us and the installation has been donated by Alliance Security Systems.

During the past year we have provided safe housing and ongoing support to 27 women and 45 children. The waiting list for women to get into Alice Housing continues to grow. Unfortunately, we are not able to keep up with the demand for housing from women who are trying to escape violence. Our work with families involved with Community Services and the justice system is increasing. I am also seeing an increase in the number of women struggling with addiction issues. We are receiving an increasing number of referrals from community agencies, as the supportive living environment provided at Alice Housing is often helpful in recovery.

The number of women who are in school or employed is growing. Women are constantly struggling with poverty and are working to become self-sufficient and end the cycle of poverty. Women are regaining control of their lives and improving their self-esteem. Alice Housing offers women the opportunity to explore these horizons through support, advocacy and subsidized housing. Presently two of the women who live at Alice Housing are working at Alice Works.

It is beautiful to see the rebirth of a spirit and working at Alice Housing provides us with the chance to see this. A former resident of Alice Housing says that she regained her spirit while living at Alice Housing. As a thank you to Alice Housing she wrote a poem for us entitled "Alice House". She says this poem expresses what Alice Housing meant to her. I had the privilege of reading this poem at the BMW Talent Showcase, *"Becoming Spirit"*.

During the summer of 1998 we were able to provide a weekend of camping for the women and children of Alice Housing. Many of the children had never been on a camping weekend and this provided the moms' and children with an opportunity that they would not normally have had.

Alice Housing has increasingly recognized the need for special attention and counseling targeted towards children. The children who live at Alice Housing have witnessed atrocities committed upon their mother that they were powerless to prevent and incapable of understanding. We have applied for a grant through the Department of Justice to provide direct services for the children and have been given a verbal answer that we will receive a grant for \$25,000.00.

The work that we do is difficult but it is full of rewards; these are some of the words of the women who have lived at Alice Housing:

"I have been so close to the edge. I don't know where I would have been without you guys. It is so important to know that I am not alone and that I can drop down to Alice Housing. You guys have keep me from going back into the Nova Scotia Hospital". These are the words from a former resident who tried to commit suicide before coming to Alice Housing.

"If it wasn't for you guys I don't know where I would be right now. I could have been living on the street. With your help I am able to go back to school and start my life again." These are the words of a young woman who had lost everything and had also been suicidal.

"I would be dead right now if it wasn't for Alice Housing." These are the words of a woman who is very much alive and happy.

It is rewarding to work with a Board of Directors and staff who strongly believe and support the philosophy of Alice Housing; to provide a safe environment in which women can begin to heal, to help them in taking responsibility for themselves and their children.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary Brennan – Executive Director – Alice Housing

Financial Report

From a financial standpoint, the year ended March 31, 1999 was very successful for Alice Housing. We ended the year in approximately a break even position, yielding a small loss of \$1,694.

Unfortunately, due to the large drain on resources for the year ended March 31, 1998 our deficit position is still a great concern and as of year end our deficit was approximately \$40,000.

Several factors contributed to the success of the year:

- Rental revenue has increased significantly; we had a higher occupancy rate which was the main reason for the increase.
- The donations have increased this year due in large part to the successful art auction.
- Administrative salaries and benefits have been substantially reduced due to the elimination of 1/2 of a full time position.
- We stopped funding the renovation reserve in July of 1998 which contributed an additional \$9,000 to the bottom line. This discontinuation of the reserve funding is temporary and the Board plans on recommencing funding as soon as possible.
- Interest income is up slightly.

The success of the year is even more impressive considering that our United Way funding has been reduced in the year by \$12,000.

We still have a lot of ground to make up, however. Our budgeting for fiscal 2000 has demonstrated how tightly we must control our costs. The deficit of \$40,000 still remains as a large concern and we can only reduce this amount by practicing future fiscal restraints.

Our United Way funding is continuing to be reduced as we move into fiscal 2000. Therefore the concentration for our organization from a financial standpoint is to increase fundraising and keep a tight reign over expenditures.

Alice Works

Alice Works also had a very successful year. Please keep in mind that the comparative figures as presented for 1998 were for a nine month period.

The two main sources of funding for Alice Works in fiscal 1999 were a grant from HRDC which was given to subsidize salaries for the year. This grant was a one time amount and will not be renewed next year. The other grant is from Women and Economic Development Consortium (WEDC). This grant was extended for a period of three years to assist in subsidizing the expenses of starting the project.

Because the objective of Alice Works is to break even, just enough revenue from the WEDC is taken each year to allow for costs to offset revenues.

Respectfully submitted,

Tracey Brittain, CA – Treasurer – Board of Directors

Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee presents the following slate of Executive and Board Members for 1999 / 2000:

Executive:

- Angie Giammario, Co-Chair
- Alice Crowley, Co-Chair
- Tracey Brittain, Treasurer
- Kara MacNeil, Secretary

Board Members:

- Penny Durnford
- Iris Hardy
- donalee Moulton
- Kim Stewart

Respectfully submitted,
Angie Giammario – Co-Chair – Board of Directors

Personnel Committee Report

The Personnel Committee of Alice Housing met in November 1998 to discuss the items listed below. Kim Turner chaired the meeting.

- ▶ Evaluation of Donna Lovelace and Rosemary Brennan
- ▶ Possible implications of organizational restructuring on employees of Alice Housing
- ▶ Other business (Personnel Policy, etc.)

Donna Lovelace and Rosemary Brennan shared their work experience during the first six months of employment. Following an in-depth discussion with Rosemary and Donna the following motions were made by the Committee.

Kim Turner moved and Linda Clarke seconded the motion that Rosemary Brennan be appointed as the permanent Program Co-Director of Alice Housing. MOTION CARRIED.

Kim Turner moved and Harolyn Wilson seconded the motion that Donna Lovelace will be laid off effective December 31, 1998. MOTION CARRIED.

The Personnel Committee recommended that the Board of Directors of Alice Housing adapt both these motions.

The Personnel Committee offered their support and assistance should any difficulties arise.

The Committee also discussed the possible implications of any organizational restructuring on the employees of Alice Housing and it was recommended that the Board look at striking a separate committee that would include Staff, to deal with the restructuring process. Donna Gursky would act as liaison to the Personnel Committee who will need to create new policies and procedures as well as job descriptions, as soon as new staff are settled in.

Committee members agreed that more frequent and intentional meetings be held in the future in order to ensure the well being of Staff and of Alice Housing.

However, due to the resignation of Board members who served on the Personnel Committee, this Committee will not begin to meet again until September 1999. The plan for that time will be to rework the draft of the Personnel Policy and Procedures that was scheduled for approval at the June 1998 Annual General Meeting and to work with Staff to create job descriptions that best suit their work experience at Alice Housing.

Respectfully submitted,
Harolyn A. Wilson

Art Auction Fundraising Committee Report

The main activity undertaken by the Fundraising Committee in 1998 was the mounting of the first annual Artworks auction. This was an art auction featuring works by Maritime women artists.

The planning for the event began early in 1998, with the assistance of a local artist, Dawn MacNutt. With her input, it was concluded that the artistic community was becoming reluctant to donate their pieces to fundraising events because of the increased demands they were facing, and that a shared proceeds formula be applied. The artists would be offered 50% of the estimated retail value of their piece if sold at the auction, with the balance of sale price going to Alice Housing.

The artists we contacted enthusiastically received this offer. Approximately half the artists accepted the payment scheme, the other half donated their works. While the net result of funds raised could have been higher had all the pieces been donated, the building of partnerships and goodwill resulting from this arrangement was considered to be important and valuable.

The event was held on December 1, 1998 at the World Trade and Convention Center in Halifax. Approximately 200 people attended, at a ticket price of \$20. Over 50 pieces of art were auctioned off, by auctioneer Brian Warshick, in addition to 40-50 items that were sold at a silent auction table. The silent auction items were all donated by the business community and various individuals.

The proceeds from the live auction were \$8,800 (net after payment to artists was \$5,200). Ticket sales were approximately \$4,000 and silent auction proceeds were \$3,400. Total revenue before expenses was \$16,200. Major expenses were payment to artists of \$3,600 and WTCC costs of \$2,850. Other miscellaneous costs were in the range of \$500. Many of the costs were covered by donations - advertising by the Daily News, waiving of rental fees at the WTCC (only catering costs were charged), communications support by Crosby Communications, poster design by Karen Smith. These donated services are estimated to be in the range of \$8,000. The net result was approximately \$9,200 to Alice Housing.

The project was considered to be a success by all those involved in staging the event, as well as those who attended. Feedback received has been positive and supportive, and conducive to holding a similar event in 1999.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Crosby – Art Auction Fundraising Committee Chair

Fundraising and Related Activities

I apologize in advance for anyone who may have been mistakenly excluded from this report; my knowledge of fundraising efforts at Alice Housing chiefly encompass efforts from January 1999 to present, when I became an employee of Alice Housing. We received core funding this year from the following: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Nova Scotia Department of Community Services, Metro United Way and the Halifax Regional Municipality.

Other than the art auction, major fundraisers included the annual floral campaign in February, a Mother's Day appeal campaign and a fundraiser in conjunction with Dartmouth Players. Deborah Stover was responsible for running the floral campaign and was able to raise funds for us totaling approximately \$1900. Our first Mother's Day appeal campaign increased our public awareness, made a small profit and the response rate for our first year was normal. The dress rehearsal of the Dartmouth Players *"Building Blocks"* play took in over \$300.

We received a \$2500 cheque from Maritime Life and a \$2000 cheque from Sisters of Charity Halifax in response to requests for funding. At the grand opening of Zellers' MicMac Mall location we received a cheque for \$2000. Funding from the Edwards Family Charitable Foundation was also received in 1998. A grant from the Nova Scotia Department of Housing, through their Shelter Enhancement Grant Program, allowed us to have work done on one of our properties. We have verbally heard that we will soon receive funding from the Department of Justice's Community Mobilization Program for our Alice's Kids Rebuilding a Safe Home Project. The Futura Club has decided to support Alice Housing this year through financial donations. The Chronicle Herald gave us a voucher for \$1000 worth of free advertising. We received proceeds from the following events: BMW Talent Showcase, *Becoming Spirit*; Halifax Women's Network Art Auction; and the Recreation Vehicle Show.

Royal LePage has become our first corporate sponsor. We are included in their newspaper advertising every second week and they have held two yard sales for us to date, one in Halifax and one in Dartmouth. We look forward to further developing our relationship with Royal LePage over the next year.

Volunteers from HMCS Charlottetown crack filled and painted our entire office through a Metro United Way Days of Caring Project. Alliance Security Systems installed and loaned us alarm systems (free of charge) for all of our buildings, including the office. They will only be charging us for the monitoring costs, which we hope to alleviate by applying for funding from other sources.

Christmas at Alice Housing this year was wonderful due to the support of Alice Housing's Christmas Angels, who purchased presents and Christmas dinners for our families. The Grace Chapel held a beautiful Christmas dinner for us, which the families enjoyed immensely.

Ticket donations were received from the following: Metro Centre for the *Wizard of Oz*; Neptune Theatre for *World Without Shadows*; Eastern Front Theatre for *Daughter of Promise*; Shakespeare by the Sea; and Metro Transit. The Zonta Club provided school supplies for the children of Alice Housing and Valentine's Day presents for the mothers. The Junior League of Halifax made a large donation of casseroles for our families during Volunteer Week. The Atlantic Superstore gives us bread and baked goods for our families every Wednesday. We received a donation of chocolate from Hershey Canada Incorporated for Mother's Day and a discount from Pierceys the Building Material People to purchase playground equipment for one of our properties. We have received two in-kind donations from the Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Public Works since January.

Alice Housing would like to sincerely thank the Art Auction Fundraising Committee for their efforts this past year and Deborah Stover for running the floral campaign. Your commitment to Alice Housing is extraordinary and greatly appreciated. We cannot forget all the individuals, organizations, and businesses that supported us this year through in-kind and monetary donations and everyone who participated in our fundraisers. THANK YOU.

Respectfully submitted,

Nadine Naas – Program Assistant – Alice Housing

Alice Housing would like to sincerely thank the following
for their support during the past year:

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
Nova Scotia Department of Community Services
Halifax Regional Municipality
Metro United Way

Royal LePage Real Estate Services Limited
Maritime Life Assurance Company
Edwards Family Charitable Foundation
Sisters of Charity Halifax
Zellers

Alice Housing's Christmas Angels
HMCS Charlottetown
Alliance Security Systems
Junior League of Halifax
Environment Canada
Dartmouth General Hospital
Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Centre
Atlantic Superstore
Zonta Club
Futura Club
Grace Chapel
Bedford United Church
First Baptist Church
World Trade and Convention Centre
Daily News
Karen Smith Graphic Design
Crosby Communications Group
Hershey Canada Incorporated
Neptune Theatre
Metro Centre

Eastern Front Theatre
Shakespeare by the Sea
Dartmouth Players
BMW Talent Agency
Halifax Women's Network
Pierceys The Building Material People
Metro Transit
Chronicle Herald
Beta Sigma Phi

Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Public Works
Own Your Future Seminar Group and Associates
And anyone else who may have been mistakenly excluded from this list

Alice Housing would also like to sincerely thank everyone who supported us this year through in-kind and monetary donations and by participating in our various fundraisers.

"Alice House"

There is a place
called Alice House
with branches like a tree.
It offers a warm, safe haven
for women like you and me.

Its branches offer shelter,
from the rage and pain within.
It gives us hope and time,
to rest our souls and minds;
a new place to begin.

It gives us strength,
when we are weak;
a chance to dream again.
It feeds our spirit
and clears a path.
To take a chance, to win.

I came, frightened and weary.
My life, I thought would end.
Now I must leave,
a new road to trod,
a new life to begin.

So please take heart!
Don't give up,
there is life and hope anew.
Stay strong, have faith and trust yourself.
A new life awaits you!

- Velda McGann, a former resident of Alice Housing, March 1999