
Alice Housing

Annual Report

April 1st, 1999 –

March 31st, 2000

Agenda

Annual General Meeting

August 9, 2000

6:00 - 8:00 PM

1. Welcome
2. Review of Agenda
3. Motion to Approve Minutes from Annual General Meeting on August 19th, 1999
4. Co-Chairs Report
5. Tendering of Reports
 - Nominating Committee
 - Executive Director
 - Financial
 - Alice Works
 - Alice's Kids – Rebuilding a Safe Home Project
 - Fundraising and Related Activities
6. Motion to Approve Reports
7. Motion to Approve Auditors
8. 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 situations. The housing aspect of the organization involves the management and maintenance of 17 apartment units, located throughout metro. The support program aspect of the organization involves offering counselling, court support, outreach and other support services for the women and children 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 that their lives will take, according to their personal values and needs.

Objectives

- 1) To provide a safe, non-judgmental environment for women leaving abusive situations, with or without children, who have identified their own need for ongoing support and counselling.
- 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

The Board of Directors of Alice Housing welcomed Angela Power as Executive Director of Alice Housing in April of this year. Angela received her Masters in Social Work from the Maritime School of Social Work in 2000 and has extensive experience in providing counselling and support for women and youth. She also brings with her a background in fund development. Although she has only been with Alice Housing for a few months, she has demonstrated exceptional leadership skills and commitment to Alice Housing.

Rosemary Brennan, who served as Executive Director for two years, resigned in January of 2000. We will miss Rosemary, and wish her well. Gail Logan graciously agreed to act as Executive Director until the position could be filled permanently.

Nadine Naas, Program Assistant of Alice Housing, continues to provide excellent service in the areas of event co-ordination, fundraising, office management, program support and public relations. This is Nadine's second year with Alice Housing and she is therefore an invaluable resource for Angela, the Board of Directors, and the residents of Alice Housing.

The Board of Directors of Alice Housing has experienced significant turn-around in the past year, but continues to benefit from the expertise, interest and dedication of the women that comprise it.

The Board of Directors currently consists of six women: myself as Co-Chair, Kara MacNeil as Secretary and Michelle Brigley as Treasurer. donalee Moulton has agreed to serve as the second Co-Chair. Nancy Neil, Cathy Crosby and Bette Tetreault have recently joined the Board as Members-at-Large.

The dedication of the individuals comprising the Board of Alice Housing is demonstrated by their Committee work: Fundraising (Cathy and Bette), Personnel (myself, Nancy, Kara and Angela), Nominating (donalee, Kara and Angela).

Throughout the past year, Alice Housing has continued to benefit from community and corporate sponsors. We are especially thankful for the support of Merrick Holm, who have provided us with generous and in-kind contributions over the past year. We are also grateful for the corporate sponsorship of Royal LePage.

The Art Auction, held in December of 1999, was extremely successful, raising approximately \$9600. Cathy Crosby, then the Chair of the Art Auction Committee, has now joined the Board of Directors and will be an invaluable resource for the Fundraising Committee of the Board.

Alice's Kids – Rebuilding a Safe Home Project, a program of Alice Housing, began in September of 1999, and provided quality counselling and support services for the children and youth of Alice Housing over the past year.

Alice Works continued to operate successfully this year, as evidenced by Dawn Howell's year-end report. Alice Works recently succeeded in obtaining a significant amount of funding from the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services, which will assist them in operating for several more months. We are hopeful that further funding will be obtained in the near future. Alice Works and Alice Housing have strengthened communication over the past year. Ruth Hanson of Alice Works provides a regular report at Board meetings and Kara has taken on the role as the Board's liaison with Alice Works.

Over the past year, the Board reviewed its By-Laws and developed Personnel Policies. The Board adopted the revised By-Laws and the Personnel Policies this summer.

In the up-coming months the Board will dedicate itself to fundraising, Board development, recruitment of Board members and improved communication with and support of the Executive Director.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Gatchalian – Co-Chair – Board of Directors

Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee presents the following slate of Executive and Board Members for 2000/2001:

Executive:

- Gail Gatchalian, Co-Chair
- donalee Moulton, Co-Chair
- Michelle Brigley, Treasurer
- Kara MacNeil, Secretary

Board Members:

- Cathy Crosby
- Nancy Neil
- Bette Tetreault
- Suzie Berneshawi
- Margaret Ann MacLean
- Francine Rousseau
- Carmen Vinci

Respectfully submitted,
Kara MacNeil – Secretary – Board of Directors

Executive Director's Report

I began at Alice Housing as the new Executive Director in April of 2000. On my second day in this position, I experienced an overwhelming sense of acceptance and respect, and four months later these terms still describe my feelings about what Alice Housing represents for both the staff and the families and women that live in our housing units.

I want to personally thank the staff of Alice Housing – Nadine Naas, Dawn Howell and Lily Szeto – for allowing my transition period to run smoothly.

The agency has gone through changes and challenges during the past year. However, this is not a new experience for our agency and for any growth to take place there must be change. In fact, whenever I am feeling unsettled by challenges that the agency must endure, I am quickly reminded of the enormous changes and challenges women and children experience so that they may grow in their journey to be free from abuse.

During the past year we have provided safe housing and ongoing support to 28 women and 47 children.

Alice Housing has increasingly recognized the need for special attention and counselling targeted towards children. The children who live at Alice Housing have witnessed atrocities committed upon their mothers that they were powerless to prevent and incapable of understanding. We received a \$25,000 grant from the Department of Justice's Community Mobilization Program and \$10,000 from IWK Grace Health Centre Foundation's External Grant Program to provide direct services for the children and families of Alice Housing and in September of 1999 we implemented a year long pilot project called Alice's Kids – Rebuilding a Safe Home Project. We now have a warm and welcoming play room in our drop-in centre which also serves as office space for our part-time child counsellor. IBM Canada donated a computer and software for the Alice's Kids Project and playing on the computer continues to be a valuable tool for assisting children to feel safe in discussing their feelings and experiences.

As I look forward to my year ahead I know that there will be challenges, but the commitment of the Board, staff and donors will ensure our growth and allow us to continue providing a safe environment in which women can begin to heal.

Respectfully submitted,
Angela Power – Executive Director – Alice Housing

Financial Report

According to the audited Financial Statements, the year ending March 31st, 2000 was not a very successful year for Alice Housing. Our Balance Sheet is showing a deficit of just over \$33,000. However, this is an improvement over the year ending March 31st, 1999 when there was a deficit of approximately \$40,000.

The greatest area of concern is the renovation reserves account. This reserve is an allocation of funds to be used for the upkeep of the rental units. Unfortunately, past financial difficulties forced the Board to use the monies for daily operating expenses. In 1999, the Board agreed to temporarily discontinue funding the account. The renovation reserves are currently under funded by approximately \$74,000.

Showing a slight reduction in the deficit over the previous year-end is impressive considering the turnover in human resources that Alice Housing has seen this year. Many Board members and staff are new to their positions, yet we have managed to improve on last year's financial picture. The Executive Director, Angela Power, is working on a budget for Alice Housing so that we have some guidelines and estimates to work with for the rest of this fiscal year.

The rental income has been our greatest single source of income this year at approximately \$72,000. The Metro United Way grant and donor designations are the second largest source of funding at approximately \$45,000.

We need to create awareness of the name 'Alice Housing' and the necessity of our services to potential sponsors. By creating a public image, we will increase donations and keep Alice Housing alive!

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Brigley – Treasurer – Board of Directors

Alice Works Report **(National Pilot Project Sponsored by Alice Housing)**

This past year was the third year for the Alice Works Project, a national pilot project receiving its core funding from the Women and Economic Development Consortium. The project's purpose is to provide employment and entrepreneurial skills to women with multiple barriers to employment through the direct, hands-on experience of building and running a small craft-based business.

In April of 1999 to the present, with the help of a groundbreaking Diversion Grant from the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services, we employed seven participants. Six had been on social assistance and four were residents or ex-residents of Alice Housing. Also the employing of 6 participants removed 8 adults and 4 children from assistance. The Department of Community Services has been very pleased with the results at Alice Works and has agreed to provide some continuing funds for employment purposes and assistance in locating further project funding.

Milestones:

- ✓ A variety of new products for the Christmas, tourist and year round 'gift' market were researched and developed. These were added to our previous product line which is constantly being refined in response to our wholesale and retail sales.
- ✓ Alice Works was invited by the Alderney Landing Corporation to run a permanent retail booth at the new Alderney Landing Market on the Dartmouth waterfront. This has provided great learning opportunities for the participants and provided a showcase for Alice Works products which are becoming well known for their quality.
- ✓ The Alice Works Project has inspired other groups to start projects using similar principles and methods: one in Revelstoke, BC, another on a native reserve in BC and also the Slovakian Women's Project visited us for a day and have used some of our concepts in a large housing project in their country's capitol city. Many other groups have also told of their encouragement from our successes.
- ✓ As juried members of the Nova Scotia Designer Crafts Council, Alice Works has successfully displayed and sold products at many of the major Craft shows.
- ✓ The women of Alice Works planned and prepared for the Tall Ships and the Festival of Sail. Sales during these events were very good and the whole event was personally rewarding for those who took part.
- ✓ Alice Works took part in our second showing at the Atlantic Craft's Trade Show, the largest wholesale craft show in Canada. We doubled our wholesale sales of last year.

The distinctive Alice Works products are for sale in 16 gift shops in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

- ✓ Alice Works received funding from CEDTAP (Carlton University's Community Economic Development Technical Assistance Program) for a CO-OP feasibility Study done by a local consulting firm. Their study concluded that although not ready for the development of a participant owned co-op, this unique project had a lot to offer, particularly in the area of hands-on training of women with multiple barriers to employment.
- ✓ Initial visioning and planning sessions have been held with participants and Advisory Board members with a view to starting a separate non-profit organization that will continue to provide training opportunities to women caught in the welfare system. We plan to implement this development in the early fall of 2000.
- ✓ As sponsors of the project, Alice Housing received extensive, positive exposure in all of our brochures, project profiles and media coverage.

Thank you for your on-going encouragement and support.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Howell – Manager – Alice Works

Alice's Kids – Rebuilding a Safe Home Project Report

The Alice's Kids – Rebuilding a Safe Home Project provides quality counselling and support services for the children and youth of Alice Housing that address their specific needs. Alice Housing believes that by intervening and counselling these children, we can proactively address those issues that lead to problem behaviors and ultimately criminalization.

The Alice's Kids – Rebuilding a Safe Home Project began in September of 1999. During the last nine months the parents and children have accomplished a great deal. At the beginning of the project, Alice Housing staff and volunteers set up the playroom and the child counsellor's office. The parents and children participated in counselling sessions and activities from then on.

According to the specific needs of the families, we provided 45 group counselling sessions for siblings, parents and children. We also conducted 68 counselling/consulting sessions for the mothers (including some former residents) of Alice Housing. We are educating parents in the application of parenting strategies such as positive reinforcement and anger management. Children that live in Alice Housing, who range in ages from 1 to 18 years, have had 58 one-on-one counselling sessions. Using different counselling strategies, they have had the opportunity to work on many issues.

Another achievement of this project is promoting the supportive sense of community among the mothers through group meetings. We also facilitated children to participate in Girl Guides and various sports such as hockey, horse riding and swimming. In general, the children's self-esteem and self-worth has improved as a result of these initiatives. During the last nine months, a few of the children had difficulty participating in school and we supported the mothers to advocate for their children. The families of Alice Housing are gradually reintegrating into mainstream society.

As a whole, the parents and children of Alice Housing have gained a lot from the project. The parents themselves have expressed their appreciation for the project. A mother of three toddlers said that there is "a lot more cooperation between them and me. The kids are excited about it. It also gives some new insight for me as I observe the interaction between the counsellor and my three young children. I've learned a lot." Another mother described her daughter as a more open young girl who started to talk to her about witnessing abuse. These two parents' responses are quite typical.

Through this project, we hope to continue to encourage new parenting skill development, quality extra curriculum activities and ongoing counselling for all of our mothers and children. It is our hope that all the families of Alice Housing will benefit from this child-centered program.

Respectfully submitted,

Lily Szeto – Child Counsellor – Alice Housing

Fundraising and Related Activities Report

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.** The Alice's Kids – Rebuilding a Safe Home Project was chiefly funded through the **Department of Justice's Community Mobilization Program** and the **IWK Grace Health Centre Foundation's External Grants Program.** **IBM Canada** donated a computer and software which is used for this project.

Major fundraisers included an art auction in December, a floral campaign in February and an appeal campaign on Mother's Day. Cathy Crosby again chaired our Art Auction Committee and through the diligent work of herself and committee volunteers the event raised approximately \$9600 for Alice Housing. Sponsors of the art auction were: **The Daily News, World Trade and Convention Centre, Atlantic Nova Print Co. Inc. and Karen Smith Design.** Deborah Stover ran the floral campaign for us again which raised funds totaling approximately \$2600. Our Mother's Day appeal campaign increased our public awareness and donations from the appeal continue to filter in.

We received financial support from the **Sisters of Charity Halifax, Maritime Life Assurance Company, The Edwards Family Charitable Foundation, Dartmouth Handcrafters Guild, Zellers Inc., Halifax Women's Network, Maid Marion I.O.D.E. and Royal Bank.** We continue to have a partnership with **Royal LePage Real Estate Services Limited** and have made a new partnership with **Merrick Holm Barristers and Solicitors.** **Sears Canada Inc.** is supporting Alice Housing through sales of a series of CDs.

Alice Housing continues to receive support from **Nova Scotia Department of Housing and Municipal Affairs' Shelter Enhancement Program.** Through grants received from this initiative we have had the electrical systems upgraded at two of our properties and a retaining wall removed and replaced. We received a grant from the **Nova Scotia Department of Economic Development and Tourism** to hire a co-operative education student for the summer.

Through the **Voluntary Sector Network Support Program (VolNet),** Alice Housing received Internet access free for one year. **The Chronicle Herald** gave us a voucher for \$1000 worth of free advertising. **MTT Mobility** has just agreed to provide Alice Housing with a cell phone and airtime package for a year. Volunteers from **HMCS Charlottetown** crack filled and painted two of our duplexes. **The Atlantic Superstore** gives us bread and baked

goods for our families every Wednesday. Alice Housing has also become a part of the **Metro Food Bank Society's Metro Meals Program** and we receive a donation of food every Thursday for the drop-in centre. We continue to receive both monetary and goods donations from the churches in our area.

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** has continued to be a tremendous support to Alice Housing, holding a beautiful Christmas dinner and party for our families and holding a camping weekend for everyone in July. **The Zonta Club** provided school supplies and books at Christmas for the children and Valentine's Day presents for the mothers. **The Futura Club** supports us through bridge fundraisers and a donation at Christmas.

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:**

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
Metro United Way
Nova Scotia Department of Community Services
Halifax Regional Municipality
Nova Scotia Department of Housing and Municipal Affairs
Metropolitan Regional Housing Authority
Nova Scotia Department of Economic Development and Tourism
Nova Scotia Department of Justice
IWK Grace Health Centre Foundation
Sisters of Charity Halifax
Maritime Life Assurance Company
The Edwards Family Charitable Foundation
IBM Canada
Dartmouth Handcrafters Guild
Royal LePage Real Estate Services Limited
Merrick Holm Barristers and Solicitors
MTT Mobility
Alice Housing's Christmas Angels
HMCS Charlottetown
Alliance Security Systems
Voluntary Sector Network Support Program
Zellers Inc.
Environment Canada
Dartmouth General Hospital
Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Centre
Atlantic Superstore
Futura Club
Zonta Club of Halifax
Maid Marion I.O.D.E.
Grace Chapel
Grace United Church
Bedford United Church
Woodlawn United Church
Christ Church ACW

Saint Andrews C.W.L.
First Baptist Church
World Trade and Convention Centre
The Daily News
Karen Smith Design
Atlantic Nova Print Co. Inc.
Hershey Canada Incorporated
Nova Scotia Liquor Commission
Halifax Herald Limited
Halifax Women's Network
Royal Bank
Proctor and Gamble
Metro Food Bank Society
Neptune Theatre
Halifax Regional Police
Forest Hill Drug Mart
Teddies for Tragedies
Sears Canada Inc.
McDonald's Restaurants

And anyone else who may have been mistakenly excluded from this list
**Alice Housing would also like to sincerely thank everyone who has
supported us through in-kind and monetary donations and
by participating in our various fundraisers.**

My Inspiration

A good cup of coffee, something to sew and a great book . . . these are three of Amy's* favourite things. Amy, a former resident of Alice Housing, pops in our drop-in centre occasionally to give back to the organization that she says gave her so much, when she had so little.

She sits across from me and I think to myself, what an amazing woman. Amy is a survivor. Just a year ago she lay in a hospital bed clinging to her life after a suicide attempt. Now Amy smiles and chuckles as she tells me about singing in the choir and planting flowers at her new apartment building.

I have only known Amy for a few months but her determined spirit constantly amazes me. I recognize what an inspiration and a treasured friend she is to the women she shared her life with during her eight month stay at Alice Housing. Every time I open our door and see Amy standing outside my spirits are immediately brightened.

Amy has been coming to Alice Housing for the past few months to clean the drop-in centre, help organize our donations room and sort through the donations for current residents. She does this in return for what she feels Alice Housing has allowed her to do. Amy has been able to rebuild her life after leaving an extremely emotionally abusive household. Since coming to Alice Housing, Amy has worked on getting her self-esteem and self-confidence back, has learned to say NO and can now set boundaries in her relationships with her family and friends. But, most importantly, Amy is an independent, free woman. She has been given the chance to heal.

I did not know Amy when she went to Bryony House with nothing but a nightshirt on her back or when she first came to Alice Housing, after she was released from the hospital following her suicide attempt. But the Amy I have come to know and respect is my inspiration and my friend. I feel privileged that Amy has been able to share her past and plans for the future with me over these past few months.

Although she has moved on from Alice Housing, Amy will always be a part of it, because each woman who stays here is the reason why Alice Housing exists. Thank you Amy for showing me why the work we do at Alice Housing is so important.

** Name changed to protect the identity of the former resident.*