



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS
HOSPICE CARE OTTAWA/MAISON DE SOINS
PALLIATIFS D' OTTAWA

Tuesday, October 7, 2025

Ruddy Shenkman Hospice – Hein House
6 – 8 pm

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Lynne Toupin, Chair of the Board of Hospice Care Ottawa (HCO). She explained that she would be using both French and English throughout the meeting for important motions, in keeping with HCO's pursuit of Partial French Language Designation under Ontario's French Language Services Act. She acknowledged special guests, including past Board Chairs, as well as the current Board, staff and volunteers and noted that "together we collectively represent the circle of caring that wraps around those we serve".

She reminded everyone that the meeting was being held on the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe people have lived on this land for millennia.

Lynne introduced Sylvie Lalonde, Secretary of the Board, and appointed Angelina Roncali as Scrutineer for the meeting.

2. Quorum

Angelina reported there were 19 voting members present or by proxy which met the quorum requirement. Lynne declared the meeting regularly constituted for the transaction of business.

3. Adoption of Agenda of the 2025 Annual Meeting

(Motion 1) Moved by Michael Pentland, seconded by Wendy Nicklin, be it resolved to adopt the agenda of the 2025 Annual Meeting that was published for members of the Corporation on the Hospice Care Ottawa website. Motion carried (17/0)

4. Approval of the Minutes of the 2024 Annual Meeting

(Motion 2) Moved by Barbara McNally, seconded by Wendy Nicklin, be it resolved to approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the members of the Corporation held on October 7, 2024 that are posted on Hospice Care Ottawa's website. Motion carried (18/0)

Kate Cholewa, Director of Residence Care and Community Services, lit three candles in remembrance of those we have served, are currently serving and for all who enable and support HCO.

5. Chair's Remarks

Lynne explained that she had been appointed as Chair of the Board in March 2025, following Benoît Hubert's extended term as Chair. She spoke to the "perfect storm" during the past year which had led to an understanding that HCO's funding model is not sustainable. The 60% of funding coming from the government is not enough, resulting in a need to raise approximately \$3 million with a small fundraising team and a donor climate that is very challenging. She described the steps taken to find a way forward which included laying off staff, finding cost efficiencies, forming a Sustainability Working Group, speaking with government officials with a view to obtaining bridge financing, and engaging with members of the community, in particular the Francophone community, to advance fundraising efforts.

Lynne noted that with 27 beds across 3 sites and an increasing ability to offer services in French, HCO is the most complex and the largest provider of hospice beds and community programs in Ontario. She expressed her thanks to Board members, Barb Mildon and her staff, who have been working diligently to steer HCO through this challenging time while continuing to provide the highest standard of care to clients and their families.

She then introduced a short video prepared by the Communications Team that pictured some of the many achievements of HCO during the previous year.

6. Executive Director's Remarks

Barb Mildon referred to the Impact Report shared on HCO's website and highlighted some of the most significant accomplishments of the year:

- recruitment of in-house residence staff, ending a dependency on expensive agency staff
- outreach to Ontario Health at Home Coordinators to increase their understanding of the services HCO offers, with a resulting increase in referrals
- new tools to track recruitment efforts and hospice bed usage
- improved operating protocols for the Central Referral and Triage System managed by HCO and Bruyere Hospital – a system envied by other hospices
- the installation of a much-needed generator at May Court Hospice
- opening of Maison de l'Est residence in July 2024, which has already served over 200 clients and recruited over 125 Francophone volunteers
- progress with communications in both French and English

Barb acknowledged the increased workload on some staff as a result of the lay-offs, as well as the concern this raised among volunteers. She was happy to advise that HCO is able to accommodate all who wish to be part of its community programs. She ended by giving special thanks to the May Court Club whose long-standing support has been instrumental to HCO, to all volunteers, including Board Members, without whom HCO would not be able to continue, and to Lynne Toupin and Benoît Hubert for their constant support and encouragement.

7. Years of Service Awards

Kate Cholewa thanked the following staff members for their exemplary service to HCO and presented them with a certificate of appreciation.

- Kim Maheral, Personal Support Worker -- 5 years
- Betha Fe Sacramento, Registered Nurse -- 10 years
- Stella Resiom – Personal Support Worker -- 20 years

Jenn Lockyer presented Kayla Savoie a certificate for her 5 years of service to HCO's Day Hospice program.

8. Outgoing Board Members

Lynne thanked Benoît Hubert, Wendy Nicklin and Barbara McNally for their time, wisdom and leadership to help guide HCO through the very difficult pandemic years, persistent financial challenges and the development and implementation of the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.

9. Election of Board Members

Lynne turned the Chair over to Sylvie Lalonde.

(Motion 3) Moved by Sylvie Lalonde, seconded by Joanne Larocque-Poirier, be it resolved that Michael Pentland and Lynne Toupin be re-elected to the Board of Directors of Hospice Care Ottawa for the 2025-2028 Term of Office. Motion Carried (16/0)

Lynne returned to the Chair and outlined the process undertaken to recruit new members to the Board. She introduced the three candidates being presented for election and briefly outlined their skills and experience, pointing to their fuller bios found on the website.

(Motion 4) Moved by Joanne Larocque-Poirier, seconded by Sylvie Lalonde, be it resolved to elect Valerie Dubois-Desroches; Johanne Lacombe and Andrea Findley to the Board of Directors of Hospice Care Ottawa for a three-year term from 2025-2028. Motion carried (19/0)

10. Auditor's Report and Financial Statements for HCO's 2024-2025 Fiscal Year

Josh Engel, Treasurer referred to the Financial Statements and the accompanying letter which explained the deficit and the combination of factors that contributed to it, including a commitment to expanding services, rising occupancy and operational costs, unexpected additional expenses and a chronically underfunded care model. He assured everyone that these challenges are being faced head-on and that HCO's leadership is acting responsibly to protect what matters most – availability and access to HCO's services.

He introduced Austin Elliott, Manager of Audit at KPMG who presented the 2024/25 Audited Financial Statements which showed a deficit of \$1,039,074. Austin noted that the audit had been conducted in accordance with Canadian auditing standards. He highlighted some items

including the continued payment of a mortgage on the Ruddy-Shenkman site and the contribution of 40,673 volunteer hours.

11. Appointment of Auditors for 2025-2026

(Motion 5) Moved by Josh Engel, seconded by Wendy Nicklin, be it resolved that Baker Tilley Ottawa be appointed as the auditors of the corporation for the 2025-26 fiscal year. Motion carried (18/0)

12. Guest Speaker

Lynne introduced Dina Bell-Laroche who had spent over 3 decades serving in Canada's high-performance sport system and written *Grief Unleashed*. In recent years she has been a coach for HCO's management and union teams and an ambassador at large for the organization.

Dina spoke movingly about grief, noting that our culture struggles with the concept. She shared four principles that underline her work in this area:

- we cannot accompany others where we dare not travel
- loss is universal
- no one teaches us how to grieve
- to better support others, we must first know ourselves

She suggested helpful ways to move through the grieving process, which is different for each person and does not end in some predetermined time.

- find someone to grieve with
- be attentive to your needs
- find ways to remember the person you love
- read, listen to podcasts
- create meaningful rituals.

Lynne thanked Dina for her inspiring words.

Sylvie thanked Lynne for her leadership as Chair, addressing challenges head on with dedication and hope.

13: Adjournment

(Motion 6) Moved by Michael Pentland, seconded by Joanne Larocque-Poirier, that the meeting adjourn.

Lynne Toupin
Chair of the Board

Sylvie Lalonde
Secretary of the Board