



**WHISTLER COMMUNITY
SERVICES SOCIETY**

"A Helping Hand Toward A Healthy Community"

AGM June 27, 2018

A Year in Review



www.mywcss.org

WCSS Chair's Report

Dear Friends,

Another spin around the sun and a whole new look to Whistler Community Services Society. And what a ride it has been! In the last year both the Directors and Staff of WCSS have been working hard balancing the needs of an ever evolving community while looking to the future of a new building and new location for our head office and Re-Use-It Centre. I am happy to say that we are finally here in our new home on Nesters Road providing a more centralized location to service the Whistler community through our programs. Our new building has not come easy and has seen many challenges over the last year. In spite of those challenges, we were still able to follow through with the successful completion of our new home. In addition to our team's efforts, the completion of the new building is due in large part to the generous donations of our funding partners and the continued collaboration and support of the Resort Municipality of Whistler and the Whistler Blackcomb Foundation.

Your WCSS board has also experienced changes in the last year, and I am always humbled by the passion and commitment of all our board members. In the last few years we have seen a shift in the operations of WCSS as the strength of our executive team increases. This board has historically been fairly hands on in the day to day operations of WCSS and we now see an opportunity to step to the side lines and focus on improving the governance of the organization.

Over the next year WCSS will continue its legacy of being the leading social service resource in Whistler. We will see some challenges as we transition into our new location but we will continue to provide the necessary programs and services our community expects from us. I would also like to ask for the assistance from all of you that operate within our community. Whether or not you use our services, we always need your support. The programs and services we provide move mountains in creating the healthy and vibrant community of Whistler. Whether you have the financial capacity to give, or you have time to volunteer, our doors are always open to your involvement. It is only by working together that we will continue to realize the success of Whistler Community Services Society.

Humbly yours,

Christian Boone

WCSS Board Members

- ❖ Christian Boone
- ❖ Jessica Averiss
- ❖ Steve Aikens
- ❖ Nikki Best
- ❖ Moses Chew
- ❖ Jack Crompton
- ❖ Cathy Jewett
- ❖ Rob Laslett
- ❖ Ken Mason
- ❖ John McGregor
- ❖ Shankar Raina

Executive Director's Report

This past year has been full of transition and change. Whistler Community Services Society continues to see a demand in all areas of our organization. Our new building, which is scheduled to open to the public on June 29th, 2018, is ready to bring even more customers and clients into our stores and accessing more of our programs and resources. Our staff and volunteers continue to provide incredible support, service and most of all help to a growing and changing community. Our people who volunteer and work for us are the true success of our organization. The compassion they show to our clients and customers is pivotal to our growth and success. In the most recent months staff have worked long days and over time in an effort to keep our store doors open, move us into new office spaces and buildings and most of all serve, help and nourish our clients and community to promote health and wellness. They have really showed incredible dedication and support to our organization through a year which has witnessed the development of a new building and space for The Re-Build It, Re-Use It and Social Services as well as a change in leadership. We are grateful for Cheryl Skribe's guidance and support over the last four years and I feel both fortunate and excited to be in this new role as Executive Director.

Our social enterprises continue to remain strong and overall experienced a 4.5 % increase in sales from last year. This translated into total revenues of \$1,567,486.00. The Re-Use-It Centre processed an incredible 48,124 bags of donations. Between the two stores we completed 83,049 transactions. We are grateful that our community continues to support and donate to our social enterprises as it is key to our success and plays a major role in the waste diversion process. It is also very important to acknowledge our Store Manger's Paul Rehel and Lori Pyne. Both of these individuals have worked incredibly hard this year to keep our stores open despite the challenges the Whistler community faces finding enough staff to support the growing economy. Both managers have worked up to 60 hour work weeks to ensure that our social enterprises remain open, support ongoing donations and the well-being of our staff. As well, they have worked hard to ensure our store doors stay open while we move, pack and open in brand new locations with minimal disruptions to our customers.

Our front line social service team play a key role in the wellness of our community and our people. The Outreach Team had 2018 one-on-one meetings in the past year. The one to one meeting are slightly down from 2017 and this may be specifically attributed to the fact that over 60% of our clients rent housing in Whistler and the cost is going up and the availability of housing is limited. The average age of the client who seeks support from the Outreach team is 38 which also speaks to the growing concerns young, working families are encountering as they try to retain affordable housing, livable wages and child care. As a result, we are seeing more residents and individuals leaving our community. Despite one to one visits being slightly lower, the needs of our clients this past year have been more complex, urgent and have required a great deal more time, advocacy and care. The primary reasons for visiting us were (1) mental health, (2) financial support and (3) advocacy. The cost of living, affordable and accessible housing and food security continue to remain core issues and concerns for our client base and our community. I am constantly inspired by our dedicated front line Outreach Team and the work they do every day to help others through non-judgemental listening, compassion and care. This job is not an easy one and our team regularly experiences challenges yet they still arrive each day with enthusiasm and the willingness to make this community a better place.

The Food Bank handed out food 2249 times in 2017. It is important to note that 35% of those visits were to feed children in our communities. The two most common reason for having to visit the food bank are similar to 2017 (1) injury and (2) one's inability to make ends meet. This year, we had a very strong hot lunch program which serves on Mondays a warm nutritious meal to anyone in the community and specifically fills the bellies of individuals and their children who access our food bank. This program would not be possible without the volunteers and we would specifically like to recognize the Fairmont Chateau Whistler for their unconditional support of this program.

As we look ahead, it is a very exciting time as we move into our new building and fill this space with people and programs which truly make this community a healthier place to live. This would not be possible without our dedicated volunteers, our board of directors, staff and our donors this past year which have contributed to our capital campaign. Thank you to

the Whistler Blackcomb Foundation and the Resort Municipality of Whistler for their continued support of our work and the assistance in building our new home. Most of all, we would be unable to do the work we do without the clients we serve and customers who support our social enterprises. Each day we learn from your stories and conversations regarding how we as a community can do better, how we can support each other in meaningful ways and how it is so important to take care of the people in our communities because it is vital to our strength, health and sense of belonging.

Jackie Dickinson, Executive Director