

**SHALOM COUNSELLING SERVICES INC.**

**Agenda of the Annual Meeting for 2023/2024**

Wednesday, February 19, 2025 5:00 p.m.

Shalom office and Zoom

**AGENDA**

1. Welcome, confirm quorum and call the meeting to order – Helen Eby
2. Approval of the minutes of the last AGM and Special Meeting – February 21, 2024, and June 19, 2024
3. Chairperson's Report – Helen Eby
4. a. Treasurer's Report – Sara Cressman  
b. Auditor's Report  
c. Audited Financial Statements  
d. Budget Approval (2024/2025): Operating budget  
e. Appointment of Auditors for 2024/2025
5. Committee Reports 2023/2024
6. Appointment of 2024/2025:  
a. Officers  
b. Directors
7. Motion to Endorse 2023/2024 Board Actions
8. Other business
9. Adjournment

**MOTIONS**

for the Annual Meeting of  
SHALOM COUNSELLING SERVICES INC.  
Wednesday February 19, 2025

2. Motion: To approve the minutes of February 21, 2024, and June 19, 2024
3. Motion: To accept the Chairperson's Report as printed
- 4a. Motion: To accept the Treasurer's Report as printed
- 4b. Motion: To accept the Auditor's report
- 4c. Motion: To accept the audited financial statements of SCS Inc.
- 4d. Motion: To accept the Operating Budget for 2024/2025 as presented
- 4e. Motion: To appoint auditors for 2024/2025
5. Motion: To accept the Committee Reports as printed
- 6a. Motion: To appoint the Officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) as presented.
- 6b. Motion: To appoint all new and continuing Directors
8. Motion: That all acts, contracts, by-laws, proceedings, appointments, elections and payments exacted, made, done, and taken by the Directors and Officers of the Corporation, referred to in the minutes of the Board of Directors of the Corporation, be and the same are hereby approved, ratified and confirmed.
9. Motion regarding other business as presented
10. Motion to Adjourn

### **3. CHAIR'S REPORT**

Two main accomplishments for Shalom Counselling Inc. with the support of the Board, during the fiscal year of 2023-2024 has been moving forward with the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategic direction, and the implementation of the Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA) in the updating and amendment of Shalom's by-laws.

In regards to EDI, the work of Iona Sky as the EDI consultant was completed, including an audit of the office building for physical accessibility, giving suggestions that will be implemented over the next while. A focus group of key supporters and users of Shalom services was convened to seek input into the strategic plan of becoming representative of multiple faiths. Shalom will remain a faith-based organization, with a goal of expanding to multi faiths in its representation. Policies and procedures have been revised to reflect EDI principles.

A special meeting of members was held in June 2024 to approve the by-law revisions in keeping with the ONCA requirements. These revisions were done with legal assistance, making Shalom completely compliant with the legislation. Policies and procedures have also been revised to account for by-law changes.

The operation of Shalom reflects the community's current post pandemic realities, especially affordability and ongoing mental health needs. The number of individuals requiring subsidized counseling sessions has remained high, making use of the Wanda Counselling Care Fund to assist with the sliding scale subsidy according to the policies that have been established for this purpose. This Fund allows Shalom to provide reduced fees for clients in the three lowest income bands. This Fund makes it possible to offer counselling sessions to many individuals and families who would otherwise not be able to afford these services. Another area of increased need has been the supports required by youth and young adults.

The Board continues to appreciate and thank the wonderful team of staff for their highly competent, committed and caring service they provide for the clients of Shalom. One key staffing change during this past year was the retirement of Paula Quarrie from the Clinical Director position and we thank her for her years of clinical service to Shalom. Joelle Martin-Root was welcomed into this role.

The Board has fulfilled its responsibilities as outlined in the Board policy. It met six times during the 2023-2024 fiscal year and held one special meeting for members regarding the approval of the amended by-laws.

Scheduled compliance reports were received from the Executive Director on areas of organizational performance including maintenance of professional standards, asset protection and service activity. The Board also received updates on program and

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staffing, service initiatives, applications for funding grants, and Shalom's involvement with the Counselling Collaborative (a partnership of five counselling agencies in the Region of Waterloo). The Board received, considered, and approved the annual budget, quarterly financial statements, and the annual financial audit. Committees reported to the Board, bringing recommendations arising from their deliberations for consideration and approval.

The annual Board Self-Evaluation was conducted in the spring of 2024 and revisions have been incorporated into the proceedings of the Board routines to make good use of Board meeting time. Board education was provided on the roles of committees, reviewed key policies of Shalom, received a review of the mental health sector in Waterloo Region and Ontario, and reviewed fiduciary duties of Board members.

I have appreciated the commitment of the board members who have completed their volunteer terms this past year including Amanda Geiger, Brent Zоргdrager, and Leanne Lobe. We thank them for their years of service and their expertise they provided for the Shalom Board and its committees.

This past year the Board has welcomed new board members to fill vacant positions, including Carla Santomero, Karen Martin, Sara Cressman and Ben Shantz. We are grateful for their enthusiasm and expertise that they are bringing to the work of the Board.

Shalom continues to need and appreciate the generous donors in our community to carry out its vision of creating "a community of peace and wellness where all can thrive". Shalom was pleased to realize the continued high level of donations at the 10,000 Steps for Mental Health event in September. I am confident that Shalom will continue to be strong, flexible, and resilient in the years to come and will make a positive difference in supporting individuals and families who are affected by mental health needs.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Eby, Board Chair

### **4a. TREASURER'S REPORT**

Shalom Counselling is able to accomplish a lot with a small budget thanks to generous donors, grant organizations, and fees collected from clients.

Over 70% of Shalom's counselling sessions have reduced fees, with some fees fully waived for those with the most need. Only with generous donors and grant organizations, can counselling be accessible to all people regardless of income levels.

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The Operating/General Fund Revenues increased 13% to \$984,298. However, \$55,612 of the increase was due to a one-time bequest donation. Expenses increased 10% to \$994,053. The overall result was a deficit of \$9,755. We are grateful to existing reserves to cover the past year's shortfall.

A total of \$57,927 was drawn from Wanda's Counselling Care Fund to help offset some of the fee reductions to those in need. The Care Fund was funded by donations collected in 2018 to 2021 and there is only \$41,343 remaining in the fund.

A copy of the audited financial statements are available upon request.

Thank you for your generous and consistent financial support that allows Shalom to carry out its mission to those in need! Thank you to Shalom's staff for their careful stewardship of these donations, the Development Advisory Committee for their fundraising work and Erb Street Mennonite Church for their generous support as Shalom's landlord.

Sara Cressman, Board Treasurer

### **5. COMMITTEE REPORTS 2023/2024**

The following excerpt, from the Shalom Policy and Procedures manual outlines the role and function of board committees:

#### **BOARD COMMITTEES**

The purpose of the Board Committees is to facilitate the work of the Board by providing focus on specific areas of SCS Inc. activities. Board Committees are sub-committees of the board with specific agendas. Members of a Committee are available to reference with the Executive Director as needed. Meetings may be set at the discretion of the Executive Director and members of each Committee. Committees report to the Board at each Board meeting, and between meetings as needed.

The Board of Directors will be responsible for appointing its members to the various committees (except for the Executive Committee which is made up of the Board officers) and the Committee members may select their Chairperson and Secretary. Each committee will appoint a Chair. The Executive Director may draft an agenda for meetings and will have this approved by the Chair prior to circulating to the Committee. Meeting minutes will be recorded by the Executive Director or designate.

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. It has been the practice that, when possible, the immediate past Chair or Vice-Chair also serves on the Executive Committee to assist in the transition to new leadership. The purpose of the Executive Committee is to handle Board matters that arise in between regular Board meetings. The Committee shall report all its interim actions in writing to the next regular meeting of the Board.

In addition, the Executive Committee shall assist the Chair in developing and coordinating the agenda for the meetings of the Board. This agenda, however, should be developed under the advice of the entire Board. The Executive Committee will invite Board Directors to take on a role within one of the Committees. The Executive Director is an ex officio member of, and primary staff contact for this Committee.

The Executive Committee will regularly and formally review the status of the corporation. In brief, its task is to serve as a functional and ongoing link between intention and performance. In this capacity the Executive Committee will have five basic functions:

- 1) Review of Executive Director's Performance:
  - a) Every three years a full performance review will be led by the Executive Committee in accordance with the prescribed format, including input from staff and Board directors.
  - b) Annual review of SCS Inc. program and Executive Director's goals to determine whether goals are being achieved, whether projections are in line with mission, whether implementation is effective, etc.
  - c) Annual review and approval of Executive Director's salary.
- 2) Strategic Planning:
  - a) Every five years a strategic plan will be developed to set strategic priorities and long-term plans for SCS Inc.
  - b) The Executive Committee will ensure that the board has opportunity to review progress on strategic priorities at each meeting.
- 3) Board Self-Evaluation: Lead annual self-assessment according to the prescribed format.
- 4) Policy 1 By-Laws: Review on behalf of the Board every two years.
- 5) Nominate new Board directors as required.

**Members of the Executive Committee 2023-2024:** Allan Sauder (Chair), Helen Eby (Vice-Chair), Brent Zorgdrager (Treasurer), Margaret Andres (Secretary). Staff: Susan Schwartzentruber (Executive Director, ex officio).

**Highlights of the Executive Committee 2023-2024:**

In 2023-2024 the Executive Committee met six times which included an extra meeting to focus on Shalom's bylaws to comply with the Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act. The law firm of Dueck, Sauer, Jutzi and Noll provided legal expertise.

Throughout the year, the Executive Director provided updates on her work and advice was given as needed. The Strategic Plan and its action plan completion were overseen by the Executive Committee.

Following the results of exit interviews for past board members, and the annual Self-Evaluation of the Board, a plan was prepared for ongoing education at board meetings and implementing other changes suggested through the feedback received. One such change which will be addressed is more active fundraising and cohesive efforts between the Development Advisory Committee and the Board. Another change suggested through the Self-Evaluation was to spend more Board time discussing strategic issues and less time on ongoing operations. This will be implemented during the next year. It is through the suggestions of our Board members that our Board activities maintain a high standard.

Board succession planning was completed as needed.

The Executive Director's performance was reviewed and goals for the upcoming year were approved. Her annual salary increase was also approved.

Thank you to each of the members of the Executive Committee for their commitment and expertise throughout the past year.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE**

The Finance Committee is responsible to oversee SCS Inc. administrative and financial activities. This includes responsibility for financial management, audit, budget, and insurance matters. The Treasurer will be a member of the Finance Committee. The Executive Director and Business & Operations Administrator are the primary staff contacts for this committee. The Finance Committee meets at a minimum three times per year.

**Members of the Finance Committee 2023-2024:** Brent Zorgdrager (Chair), Paul Fast, and Sara Cressman (started June 2024). Staff: Susan Schwartzentruber and Greg Chandler Burns.

**Highlights of the Finance Committee 2023-2024:**

The Finance Committee met three times during the fiscal year.

The first meeting of this fiscal year was on December 13, 2023. The purpose of this meeting was primarily to meet with Shalom's external auditor, Ed Simon of E.M. Simon, CPA, Professional Corporation. Ed reviewed the audit process (which takes a largely substantive approach) and the draft audited financial statements to September 30, 2023. He did not identify any concerns with the financial controls at Shalom. Ed provided a clean audit opinion. It was noted that the large deferred funding in the audited financial statement is from the Community Recovery Support Fund that will fund this fiscal's EDI project. It was decided to recommend to the board that transferring interest income from other funds to the operating fund. An outstanding fee policy was presented to the committee and suggested to be brought forward to the board.

At its June 5, 2024, meeting, the Committee welcomed Sara Cressman to the committee and board. The committee reviewed operational and capital fund finances year-to-date and discussed initial considerations for the preparation of the upcoming 2024/2025 budget including the continued usage of the WCCF. Three options were presented with the balanced option between service driven and cost contained was recommended to be developed. The meeting also included a discussion related to the staff cost of living increases, this was set to 2.7% as per policy. An adjusted fee scale was discussed collapsing several of the top sliding fee scale categories. There were initially discussions around the renewal of the lease expiring in August 2025, which Susan would follow up with our landlord.

At its meeting on September 4, 2024, the Committee reviewed year-end projections and the proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year, which was recommended to the Board for approval. The organization is reporting a large operating deficit due to reduced client fees, donations and grant income due to the completion of a grant associated with the Counselling Collaborative. There was a strong encouragement from the committee to have staff, board and the DAC focus on raising income levels in the coming year through fundraising, grant proposals, and increased client revenue. The committee recognized that Wanda's Counselling Care Fund will be exhausted, as planned, this coming fiscal and discussed efforts to replenish or revitalize this fund, recommending further discussion by the DAC. The committee recommended to capitalize several costs such as a water heater replacement, and future projects in the coming fiscal regarding website redesign and migration to a new client database. A new fee scale was recommended to the board which raised the top rate by \$10. The committee recommended that Shalom again transfer interest income from other funds to the operating fund.

## **POLICY AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

This committee maintains a schedule to regularly review Board, Organizational, and Human Resource policies. Our mandate is to keep the policies up to date, assess the need for changes to the policies, or recommend the addition of new policies. In addition, this Committee oversees the professional standards for Shalom Counselling Services and advises the Board on matters related to any professional standards or policies.

### **Members of the Policy and Professional Standards Committee 2023-2024:**

Margaret Andres (Chair), Carla Santomero, Karen Martin, Helen Eby. Staff: Susan Schwartzenruber and Greg Chandler Burns.

### **Highlights of the Policy and Professional Standards Committee 2023-2024:**

Shalom Counselling Services holds four distinct governing policies:

Policy 1: Board Policies

Policy 2: Management of Executive Director

Policy 3: General Organizational Policies

Policy 4: Human Resource Policies

Each year, two of the four policies undergo an in-depth review, alternating the following year. In addition, this committee is also available to support and advise on non-scheduled reviews of policies as need arises.

The governing documents also include the by-laws which are included as an Appendix within Policy 1. The responsibility for reviewing the by-laws lies with the Executive Committee and is scheduled for spring every other year.

This past year, this Committee picked up on the work that was deviated from last year when the Bylaws needed to be updated to meet the requirements and be in compliance with the Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA). The committee focused on Policy 1 and Policy 4.

In policy 1, many of the changes reflected the work that the organization undertook during our strategic planning and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion assessment. This work is reflected in language changes to celebrate the history and Mennonite roots of the organization while moving towards a multi-faith representation. Prominent changes addressed board member recruitment and staff hiring. New language reflects a commitment to Shalom's Vision, Mission and Values rather than a Christian background.

An overarching goal was to embed principles of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion throughout both policy sections which led to further language changes or process clarification. For example, in the annual performance reviews for staff there is a new



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question that asks for reflection on how their awareness or knowledge has grown in the past year. A question similarly has been added to the annual board evaluation.

We are grateful for the detailed recommendations that EDI consultant, Iona Sky, provided to guide our edits this year and for the upcoming year as well.

Thank you to staff and board members for their attention to detail as well as organizational scope in their review of these documents.

### **ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

The Board of Directors may from time to time establish a temporary or standing Committee for the purpose of investigating, reporting on or otherwise dealing with specific areas of interest and concern of the SCS Inc. Such Committees shall be appointed by the Board of Directors and shall operate within such terms and references provided by the Board.

### **DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Purpose:** The role of the Development Advisory Committee (“DAC”) is to generate ideas, build relationships and advise the Board of Directors on church relations, marketing, communications, and fundraising.

**Accountability:** The Development Advisory Committee reports to the Board of Directors. The DAC is chaired by a member of the Board of Directors who is appointed by the Board and acts as a liaison between the DAC and the Board. The Business and Operations Director is the primary staff contact for this committee. These meetings are also attended by the Executive Director.

**Committee Composition:** In addition to the chair, other members of the Board of Directors may be appointed to the DAC at the discretion of the Board. Other members will be solicited from the faith community. People with skills in the areas of marketing, communications, and fundraising will be recruited. All those serving on the DAC must be appointed by the Board of Directors.

**Members of the Development Advisory Committee 2023-2024:** Amanda Geiger (chair), Laverne Brubacher, Jim Erb, Ed Nowak, Leanne Lobe, and Katie Steckly. Staff: Susan Schwartzentruber and Greg Chandler Burns.

### **Highlights of the Development Advisory Committee 2023-2024:**

In 2023-2024 the DAC continued to bring guidance, creativity, and expertise to Shalom’s development and donor relations. The team met every few months on Zoom

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to discuss Shalom's operations and annual fundraising activities, including the Spring Breakfast and 10,000 Steps walk. Throughout the year the committee received updates regarding Shalom's operations and financial situation, as well as that of the broader counselling landscape in the Region of Waterloo. The DAC considered ways in which to connect with donors, new and old, and with the public at large.

The annual Spring Brunch fundraiser was held on Saturday, May 4th, 2024, at Golf's Steak House & Seafood in Kitchener. Attendees enjoyed a catered meal, while staff were able to connect with attendees about the work of Shalom and its impact on the community. Advertising for the event was done through church bulletin announcements, fundraising letters to Shalom's donor list, and email invitations. Staff and board members also sold tickets. This effort resulted in tickets selling out two weeks in advance of the event, with a total of 132 attendees. Ross Kennel was the featured speaker, presenting on the theme of "Stuck in the Middle with You: Stories and

Thoughts on Healthcare." Overall, the Spring Brunch was successful in connecting with Shalom's supporters and raising funds for Shalom's work.

On September 21, 2024, Shalom hosted the annual 10,000 Steps For Mental Health Fundraiser. After the success of 2023's special 40th anniversary event, this year's fundraiser also included live music during the pre-walk program, and food was provided in the Shalom parking lot following the walk as well. The event had a great turnout of 107 total participants (an increase from the previous year) and raised a total of \$57,061 from 368 individual donors (also an increase). It was lovely to see the energy from last year's record breaking 10,000 Steps Fundraiser continue on to 2024, even after the anniversary celebrations had ended. Once again, 10,000 Steps for Mental Health was a very successful fundraiser for Shalom, and a wonderful opportunity to connect with Shalom's supporters, and the wider community.