

AGM Highlights 2015

At the 2015 Annual General Meeting, in her message, the Interim Chair, Shannon Hunter, said,

“You will see many examples of selfless Helping Hands employees and volunteers working in partnership within the community. It is this type of collaboration that helps make our community a great place to work and live, and underscores the value of a locally based organization like Helping Hands. We are proud to be associated with such hardworking and caring individuals.

As advisor to Management, the Board must balance strategic opportunities with risk discipline and monitor the organization’s systems and processes to manage those risks, be they changing processes, improving practices, or expanding services. To guide this work, over the next 5 years, a Strategic Plan has been developed and will be released in the upcoming months. With this Plan and the competent and innovative leadership of Executive Director, Rob Soczka, Helping Hands will continue to grow, develop and strengthen in an ever changing Health Care environment.

Retiring this year are Directors Carol Robertson, Robert Bowles; Vice-Chair, Tony Cuthbert and Treasurer, Michael Craig. Their experience and expertise added knowledge to the organization in client awareness, client focus, and organizational stability that will support it for years to come.

I thank the Directors of the Board for their ready support and hard work. The Executive Committee have given many hours in managing the detail of a dynamic year and done so with the grace of humor.

The engagement and counsel by all has provided the structure that allows us to continue to look for innovative ways in which we can increase the value and reward of our services supporting the needs of our community, caringly and effectively.”

Executive Director, Rob Soczka, noted that,

“This year, our Board of Directors adopted a new slogan for Helping Hands; *“Bringing Independence Home.”* This slogan clearly establishes that helping our clients to maintain their independence is at the core of what we do.

Helping Hands has been involved in a number of initiatives, including our Couchiching Health Link, the Community Health Information Portal and the Community Transportation Portal led by the County of Simcoe.

In this last year, Helping Hands was designated as a provider of Assisted Living Services for High Risk Seniors (ALS-HRS) from the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN), our primary funder. Greater emphasis will be placed on our Transitional Bed Program to help clients transition out of hospital and back into their home environment. With the development of the

new Transportation Portal and Health Links, we can expect to see an unprecedented coordination of services with other agencies to improve services for clients across the region.”

Auditor, Dan Sawatsky presented his 2015 Financial Statements. He drew attention to the introductory page of the Independent Auditor’s Report, which states:

“In my opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Helping Hands, Orillia as at March 31, 2015 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not for-profit organizations.”

Dan congratulated Rob on the achievements of the organization and spoke of Helping Hands’ success.

LHIN CEO, Jill Tettmann, spoke of the collaboration between Orillia Soldiers’ Memorial Hospital and Helping Hands, and the need for such collaboration in the Health Care sector. Jill spoke of the struggle to adapt to best serve the needs of a constantly evolving and growing population and congratulated Helping Hands on their efforts and the partnerships with other community service agencies they have and continue to form.

Terri Soukup, Director of Client Services, spoke of Helping Hands’ recent achievements on the Client Services Agreement and the new Client Handbook which will help enhance client care and compliance with Privacy Regulations.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank Victoria, Kate, the Helping Hands staff and the Swanmore Hall staff for organizing and supporting our Annual General Meeting. We are extremely grateful for the help that you provided in planning the event, the functional yet elegant preparation of the hall, and the impressive presentation and delicious food prepared for our guests, and for the assistance provided by the team on the day. Your contribution to the event which brought together more than 70 people from the community, the LHIN, and the hospital, was the highest number we have ever had. This was an important part of its success. The compliments came quickly, saying it was a professional and well paced event.

Shannon Hunter
Board Chair