

# ANNUAL REPORT



## 2015-2016

**250-386-4331**

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"Family Services of  
Greater Victoria"

### VISION STATEMENT

Family Services of Greater Victoria (FSGV) is the province's premier agency for all family members facing change and challenges in their relationships. FSGV's professional staff combines current knowledge with training to provide a wide range of caring, timely, and effective services.

### MISSION STATEMENT

Family Services of Greater Victoria (FSGV) helps children, youth, and adults manage the challenges of separation, divorce, or transition to a new family structure. Our highly qualified staff, working with other community agencies, provides information and practical and emotional support so people facing these challenges can make the decisions that are best for everyone. FSGV believes all individuals can find ways to move forward in their lives when family relationships have changed or are changing.

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## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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*Bruce McGuigan, MA*

## PUBLIC EDUCATION

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### First Response Services

*Raji Goel, Dip. Office Admin  
Sandra Teiffel, BA, Dip Ed  
Teah Scotten, BA  
Ashley Creed\*  
Cara Kelley-Smith\**

### Parenting After Separation

*Ava Bahrami, MA, CCC  
Colleen D Kelley, BS, BSW, RSW  
Craig Holm, MA, CCC  
Lionel Zelniker, MA, MSW*

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## LEGAL SUPPORT SERVICES

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*Pam Rudy, BEd. – Legal Support Services Coordinator*

*David McCoy,  
RN, BHS, MA(Leadership & Training)*

### Court Support

*Roy Asselstine\**

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## MEDIATION

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*Amy Robertson,  
BCom(with Distinction), Cert FamMed, FMC Cert, CFM*

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## COUNSELLING & THERAPY SERVICES

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*Ava Bahrami, MA, CCC  
Barbara Green, MA  
Craig Holm, MA, CCC  
Jessica Cumming, MA(in progress)\*  
John Ricker, MA, RCC  
Luciana Daghum, MA, CCC*

*Rebecca Corcoran, MA, RCC  
Sarah Causton, MSW, RSW  
Shelaine Grant, BSW, RSW  
Talia Ingram, MA (in progress)  
Yuko Kawasumi, MA(in progress)\**

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## SUPERVISORS

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### Clinical Supervisor

*Jane Taylor Lee, MA, CCC*

### Legal & Mediation Supervisor

*Crystal Buchan*

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## “BEHIND THE SCENES”

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### Computer Technician

*Melvin Klassen, BSc\**

### Bookkeeper

*Linda R Barry, CGA*

**\*Volunteer during the past year**

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## STATEMENT OF VALUES

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*Safety and Well-being – We are committed to the ideals of safety, well-being, and justice for all family members, with the welfare of children our top priority.*

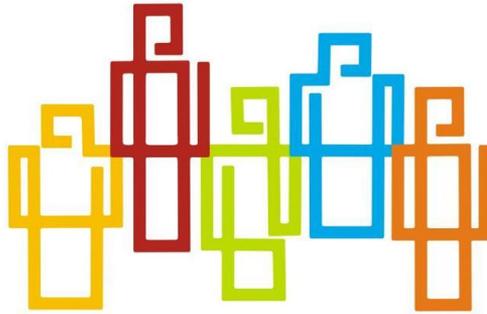
*Responsibility – We are committed to the highest standards of excellence in service-delivery and organizational management. This includes responsible, compassionate, and ethical care for everyone who uses our services as well as a commitment to ongoing training and support for our staff and volunteers.*

*Autonomy – We believe people are responsible for making decisions that are right for them in their own lives. Our role is to support this process.*

*Diversity – We embrace diversity, including that of culture, race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, ability, income, and sexual orientation.*

*Inclusion – We are committed to creating an inclusive workplace that welcomes input from all staff, contractors, volunteers, members, and clients. As a team, we draw on the resources, skills, and abilities of our team members in order to best serve our clients.*

*Respect – We are committed to respectful behaviour and communication, both within our workplace and in our community.*



**FAMILY SERVICES  
OF GREATER VICTORIA**

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**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

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*The only constant in any year for this agency is change. In 2015 we changed our name from BC Families in Transition to Family Services of Greater Victoria, our fourth name in 40 years. In keeping with the new name, we expanded our mandate from helping families cope with separation and divorce to programs, such as mediation, that help families stay together.*

*In 2015 we suffered a very large revenue hit from one of our major funding agencies that could have sunk us. Thanks largely to Bruce's no-nonsense leadership, with the full support of the board and staff, volunteers and counsellors, we survived that financial crisis and are in better financial shape than we were last June at our AGM.*

*That said, we have a way to go. We are not as inclusive an agency as we would like to be. With less funding, we've had to rely more on fee revenue than in the past, although our fees are still lower than most other social service providers. Sometimes clients who can't pay are put on waiting lists—a rarity before, more common now. It is a price we have had to pay to continue providing top-quality service at all.*

*Also, we need to rely more on donations from the public. If you are a giver, and I know most of you are, please consider directing your charitable giving to Family Services of Greater Victoria through our website. You'll get some of it back as a tax benefit and we can continue to improve our service.*

*Currently, the majority of that service is to the children of our community. Over 70 per cent of our clients are children—teens and younger. We help these children cope with the fallout from their parents' relationship issues, while encouraging parents to remain together—not just for the sake of the children, not just because staying together will make them happier as well, but ultimately because healthy families mean healthier communities.*

*It has been my pleasure and privilege to serve as chairman of the board of Family Services of Greater Victoria for these past two years of change. It has been my pleasure and privilege to work with a board whose members continually impress me with their knowledge, their compassion, their intelligence, and often their wisdom. We are very fortunate to have this fine set of people working with this agency.*

*And it has been my pleasure and privilege to work with Bruce McGuigan as our executive director for the past two years. I am proud to call Bruce a friend, but I am also in awe of his intelligence, his compassion, his ability to make hard decisions, and his work ethic. Thanks to his dedication, Bruce gives this agency more of his time and energy than he should and I, personally, and all of us on the board, are very grateful to him.*

*But Bruce couldn't do this without a dedicated cadre of staff, counselors and volunteers—in this, our agency is especially blessed. And I can hardly refer to the dedication of our staff without a special mention of Pam Rudy, who has been with us, this year, for 30 years, and Raji Goel, who has been an indispensable part of this agency for more than 20 years. It is a sign of the basic strength of our agency that we could inspire such fine people to stay with us for so long.*

*We will elect a new board in a few minutes; we have a slate of candidates that I know are of top-quality. The new board, working closely with Bruce and his staff, will help Family Services of Greater Victoria to move into the future with confidence, meeting each new change as it arises.*

Thank you.

Paul MacRae  
Board President

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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*Family Services of Greater Victoria continues its tradition of giving comprehensive annual reports that include program enrollments and complete financial information. Our community, funders, board and staff are able to access information that demonstrates what we accomplish, and how much we spend to do it.*

*Small non-profits always exist in a tenuous administrative environment, and ours is no exception. The challenges of last year as a result of a late announcement of reduced historical funding levels from a major funder were a hard adjustment. Serving as many clients as we do, for as long as we provide services, makes alterations in service delivery slow to implement. With our on-going commitment to clients it took till mid-fall to adjust to the new financial reality and required accessing some of our reserve funds to make it through the year. For decades, we provided timely services to anyone, regardless of their ability to pay. This year, we had to delay service delivery to those who could not pay, or could not pay much. This was implemented in both our counseling and Caught in the Middle programs, and it was difficult.*

*All of that said, this is the only opportunity I regularly have to boast of the successes of Family Services of Greater Victoria. Despite the challenges, we delivered astounding services to our community this year. We provided **2,176 hours** of high quality professional counseling services. We delivered **242 group program sessions** in four different group programs for an astonishing total of **5,298 participant hours**. Our legal services department helped **2,665 people** through the family law maze.*

*We are able to provide this level of service because of the dedication of our employees and graduate counselors.*

Bruce McGuigan  
Executive Director

## FIRST RESPONSE SERVICES

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*First Response Services is the first point of contact for our clients. Our staff, contractors, and volunteers are trained to respond to clients in their first contact with the*

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agency, and every subsequent visit. They are not “receptionists”. They are more like an emergency ward triage team. They answer 30 to 60 calls a day in addition to the clients coming in the door and determine their needs and how to best meet those needs. About 1 in 5 inquiries are referred to other agencies.

We continuously fine-tune First Response services. One of Raji Goel’s multiple roles is coordinator of First Response. Sandra Teiffel, a retired school counsellor with 30 years’ experience, joined us as a volunteer in 2006 and is now an employee managing the intake process. We have also relied heavily on Teah Scotten (who left us in January to attend Adler University). Of course we couldn’t function without the help of our Volunteers, this year we were fortunate to have Cara-Kelley Smith, and Ashley Creed.

First Response is a critical element of our agency and much much more than just `reception` however it remains unfunded by any major funder and is supported by fee revenue and general donations.

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## CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE

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This year we ran 10 intake sessions, and 6 group cycles and in two of those group cycles we expanded to provide additional groups.

In total, we provided 195 group sessions and over 2400 client-hours of service.

Our intake model allows us to refer clients to counseling and other services when they are not ready for the 8 week program or when they cannot attend.

Ava Bahrami coordinated Caught in the Middle. She went on maternity leave at the beginning of the year and we have been very pleased to welcome back Luciana Daghum as a counselor, group facilitator and Caught in the Middle coordinator. We have a deep bench of adult and children’s group facilitators, including Ava Bahrami, Craig Holm, Barbara Green, Frankie Kelley, Jane Taylor-Lee, Laurie Truant, Rebecca Corcoran, , and Shelaine Grant

Caught in the Middle is an immensely successful program that we are able to provide thanks to funding from the Gaming, and The Ministry of Children and Family Development and United Way.

## PARENTING AFTER SEPARATION

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*Parenting after Separation is a province-wide program created by the Ministry of Justice, and we have been contracted since 1997 to provide it for the community of Greater Victoria. It is 3-hour information session with some group interaction and individual assistance. It includes an introduction to the family legal system and a large amount of information about co-parenting, with discussion and a problem-solving focus. Given that the family law system in BC has been overhauled this year with the introduction of the Family Law Act, our Parenting after Separation program is an especially important community resource.*

*Our contract with the BC Ministry of Justice specifies there must always be 1 male and 1 female presenter, and whenever possible there is a guest speaker from the Family Justice Centre.*

*Although Parenting after Separation is mandatory for many people as part of their legal proceedings, about a third of all participants attend voluntarily.*

*This year we ran 38 sessions for 883 registrants. Each session has, on average, 24 participants. Year after year our Parenting after Separation program is the most widely-requested and widely-attended in the province. Each participant receives a completion certificate which is valid at court for 2 years, and we are seeing increasing numbers of people having to re-attend when their court cases take longer than 2 years to complete. We also continue to see waiting lists up to a month or longer.*

*Raji Goel coordinates the Parenting after Separation program and our First Response Services team handles participant registration and confirmation call-backs. Lionel Zelniker—a social worker and group counsellor for over 40 years—has been involved with Parenting After Separation since 2002. Jane Taylor Lee has been involved since 2009. Ava Bahrami, Craig Holm, Jane Taylor Lee, Lionel Zelniker, and Sarah Flynn have been doing a fabulous job in this program and this year we added in Frankie Kelley. All facilitators are exceptionally talented and this is evident once again in the program evaluations. Most participants are compelled by court order to take the program many are hostile but in the end over 90 percent of them state the workshop was very helpful. In the evaluations we are frequently told by participants that they wish the workshop could have been longer.*

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## PARENTING WITH A NEW PARTNER

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Parenting with a New Partner began in 2006 with a grant from the Queen Alexandra Foundation for Children, and we have continuously refined the content and the format. John Ricker coordinates the program and Barbara Green has been the program facilitator for ten years. The purpose of this program is to help parents who have added a new partner into the home and thereby become a 'blended family,' and who have found stress in the new family relationships to be a result. Becoming a blended family is almost always a difficult transition and our group provides a context to examine and enrich the changed relationships, both between the partners and with the children/stepchildren. Staff member John Ricker coordinated this program superbly once again this year, in the process conducting many intake sessions to help couples determine whether a group program or couples counseling would offer a more effective approach. Once again Barbara Green provided all the group facilitation, maintaining a dynamic atmosphere which fully engaged the participants. We provided two Parenting with a New Partner courses this year.

Parenting with a New Partner is an unfunded program. We try to schedule it for times in which our group rooms are underutilized and rely on fee revenue to make it run, necessitating relatively high enrollments and a reduced flexibility on ability to pay. The coordinator role is supported by general donations.

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## LEGAL SUPPORT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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Our Legal Support Services Program (LSSP) team was comprised of Pam Rudy (Program Coordinator and Legal Advocate), David McCoy (Legal Advocate), and Roy Asselstine (Court Support Volunteer) who were all under the legal supervision of family lawyer Crystal Buchan. It seems a miracle that Crystal has been supporting FSGV for about 20 years. Thanks seem not enough, but nevertheless I do want to thank her for such dedication and being a wonderful person to work with all this time. For the past two years I have also had the great pleasure of working with David and Roy who have been excellent additions to the team.

Significant changes occurred in Our Court Support Program. Coinciding with having our office closed on Mondays, we temporarily suspended having Pam attend family remands on Mondays at the Western Communities Courthouse. There were also a series of changes made by the Legal Services Society regarding provision of Lead Duty Counsel for family remands on Thursdays at the Victoria Courthouse. As new counsel were hired several times over the year, Crystal arranged for our team to meet with them to describe our role at court and discuss collaborative strategies for working together. Despite all the changes, Roy and David displayed exemplary professionalism along with good humour, taking it all in stride.

We received frequent positive acknowledgement by courtroom staff and duty counsel who appreciated our role in initiating contact with self-represented litigants to sign them up for meeting with duty counsel on a first-come-first-serve basis, which in turn aided in using court time efficiently. Before court one morning, a provincial court judge, Madam Justice Harvey, came to our table in the hallway and personally expressed how she valued the service we provided to the courts. In addition to duty counsel sign-ups, we

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were also busy providing procedural information about the court process and accompanying litigants from the courtroom to the judicial case manager's office to set court dates. In total we assisted **1061** on family remands during the year.

We were very pleased to be selected by the Law Foundation to begin providing Expanded Advocacy Services based on a model proposed by Denice Barrie. She was hired by the Law Foundation to research and develop an expanded service model that would give advocates the ability to help the neediest clients achieve better outcomes with their legal matters by assisting with forms completion, document preparation, letter-writing, and accompaniment to court or legal resources. Prior to developing the model, Denice had interviewed several organizations' advocates, including Pam, to get input.

The Law Foundation also funded the creation of a database system for legal advocates. By compiling our client information, the database really simplified the process of producing monthly statistical reports for the Law Foundation.

There were **444** legal support appointments over the year. We had more repeat appointments because of offering expanded services to individuals who needed help with forms for various court procedures such as undefended divorces, applying to waive supreme court fees, and applying to vary child support and/or arrears. An additional **139** individuals were office drop-ins who were seeking legal information.

Advocates responded to **305** phone calls from individuals who had legal questions. Staff and advocates responded to **701** other legal calls which were mainly related to scheduling individual appointments, dealing with cancellations, re-scheduling, and giving referrals to other organizations such as the Victoria Justice Access Centre.



On a personal note, this is my thirtieth year to celebrate being a part of this amazing organization. However, I have not considered being "here" (4 agency name changes) in terms of time. For me, it has been a continuous learning opportunity and a truly humbling experience to be trusted with the sensitive information shared by clients. Through them I have gained perspective and ongoing inspiration.



Respectfully submitted,  
Pam Rudy  
Legal Support Services Coordinator

## MEDIATION

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*We began our mediation program in May 2015 with Family Mediator, Amy Robertson. She co-mediated parties' property issues with our legal supervisor, Crystal Buchan, before obtaining her Comprehensive Mediation Certificate in September 2015. Since then, Amy has provided outstanding service mediating all aspects of family separation. Over 21 parties attended their pre-mediations and joint sessions; and a majority of these parties were able to reach agreements. This is a remarkable achievement given that Amy was only available on Tuesday afternoons while devoting the rest of the week to her private practice. Additionally, we are pleased to confirm that mediation is a financially self-sustaining program due to the fees paid by clients.*

## PARENTING AFTER SEPARATION—FINANCES

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*Amy Robertson was our facilitator for these free, 3-hour information sessions that provided parents with complete overviews of how financial aspects of separation (child support, extraordinary expenses, spousal support, and property/debt division) are dealt with according to family law. Funding was provided by the Justice Education Society to deliver 6 sessions during the past fiscal year.*

## COUNSELLING DEPARTMENT

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Our agency has offered group counselling programs since 1979, and an array of individual, couple, and family therapy services since 2006. Since then we have greatly expanded the size, scope, and versatility of this department to serve all ages, all walks of life, and all family configurations. By now we are able to respond to almost any family situation in which changes in relationships are the primary concern.



Our Counselling services consists of individual and couples counselling, as well as Expressive Arts, and Play Therapy for children ages 4 & up. Some of our children's clients benefited with Animal Assisted Therapy by having Ava's dog Leo, accompany her with appointments, and continued when Luciana brought her dog, Misty with her on appointments as well.

In this fiscal year we provided 2,176 hours of counseling services. Service delivery is down from 2,400 last year due to receiving less from United Way than in previous years and closing Mondays to contain front-end costs. The demand for counseling services for children and youth continues to be very high. Generally, our fee for service recovery on Child and Youth Counseling is lower than for adults and children require many more sessions, some staying with us for a year or more. These two factors place significant financial demands on our counseling programs.



The department is coordinated by John Ricker and John also provides supervision to counselors working with adults. Jane Taylor-Lee provides clinical supervision for our children's counselors. Last year our counseling staff consisted of: Ava Bahrami, Craig Holm, Jessica Cumming, Luciana Daghum, Rebecca Corcoran, Sarah Causton, Shelaine Grant, Talia Ingram, and Yuko Kawasumi.



## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### Income Statement

	Reviewed 2015-2016	Reviewed 2014-2015	Reviewed 2013-2014
<b>Revenue</b>			
BC Gaming	\$99,000	\$99,000	\$45,899
United Way	30,000	67,605	90,206
Law Foundation	75,000	90,000	91,200
Ministry of Justice	19,760	23,533	25,094
Fees & Miscellaneous	92,358	84,451	56,106
Ministry of Children and Family Development	42,240	42,000	42,000
Foundations (other)	13,370	63,643	16,542
Amortization of deferred contributions	13,686	13,686	13,686
	<b>\$385,414</b>	<b>\$483,918</b>	<b>\$380,733</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Program Delivery Personnel	\$235,234	\$236,459	\$195,161
Rent & Utilities	84,805	85,847	75,656
Contractor Fees	34,885	46,021	54,441
Administration*	21,258	18,257	15,776
Accounting/Audit	8,630	8,801	6,376
Supervision, Legal	5,000	5,000	5,000
Supervision, Clinical	5,787	6,455	4,280
Telephone, Fax, Internet	8,386	9,536	9,315
Amortization	14,783	15,811	15,672
Advertising	1,648	4,087	1,767
Security	1,008	1,034	2,843
Training & Travel	5,969	1,448	661
Memberships	1,423	1,268	1,358
Insurance	1,148	1,300	1,254
Program Development	1,147	1,644	1,886
	<b>\$427,032</b>	<b>\$442,968</b>	<b>\$391,447</b>
<b>Surplus (Loss)</b>	<b>(\$41,618)</b>	<b>\$40,950</b>	<b>(\$10,714)</b>

\*includes bank charges, supplies, etc

## Balance Sheet as at March 31<sup>st</sup>

	2016	2015	2014
<b>ASSETS</b>			
Bank Acct, Cash, GST			
Receivable	\$ 132,791	\$ 156,588	\$ 140,747
Funding Receivable	2,423	4,759	7,280
	<b>\$ 135,214</b>	<b>\$ 161,347</b>	<b>\$ 148,027</b>
Capital Assets	65,802	80,585	6,396
	<b>\$ 201,016</b>	<b>\$ 241,932</b>	<b>\$ 244,423</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>			
Fixed Operating Costs Payable	\$ 9,997	\$ 10,951	\$ 8,144
Variable Operating Costs Payable	6,301	10,959	15,021
Deferred Income	119,000	99,000	127,500
Deferred Revenue	61,587	75,273	88,959
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 196,885</b>	<b>\$ 196,183</b>	<b>\$ 239,624</b>
<b>Unrestricted Net Assets</b>	4,131	45,749	4,799
	<b>\$ 201,016</b>	<b>\$ 241,932</b>	<b>\$ 244,423</b>

### TREASURER'S REPORT

*I am pleased to submit the Report on the financial situation of Family Services of Greater Victoria for the period April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016. The figures above include the last 3 years reviewed.*

*All things consider, financial management in the past year was good. We did have a deficit, and did access our reserve. This is a natural consequence of reduced United Way funding over previous years and news of that reduction coming to close to the end of the fiscal year to make program and spending adjustments before the beginning of the new year. Fee revenue was up despite reduced services levels that were a consequence of the reduced grant. A 20% reduction in overall expenditures resulted in 10% less counseling hours being available and the office closing on Mondays. We were able to maintain services in all other programs.*

*The deficit shown includes funds received in December from the Victoria Foundation for our Men's Program and deferred to this fiscal year making the operational deficit appear larger than it is. On the whole, an operational deficit of \$20,000 is about what we would anticipate considering the limited period we had to adjust to funding for this past year and the demands for service placed on the organization. These kinds of surprises are why we have a reserve fund.*

The cash on hand numbers warrant a comment. We generally receive Gaming funds and some small grants before the end of fiscal and these funds are earmarked for spending in the following fiscal, leaving us with significant apparent cash reserves at the end of each fiscal. These are not surpluses.

*If you have any questions regarding the information on the Financial Statements, please let me know and I can be of further assistance to you.*

*Glenn Anness,  
Treasurer*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2015 - 2016

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**Paul MacRae, MA** - President  
Editor

**Glenn Anness** - Treasurer  
Manager, Driver and Vehicle Licensing Policy

**Elizabeth Cox** - Director  
Consultant

**June Preston, MSW** - Director  
Social Worker

**Malcolm McMicken, LLB** - Director  
Lawyer

**Samantha de Wit, LLB** - Director  
Lawyer

**Shauna Tucker, LLB** - Director  
Lawyer

### AGENCY FUNDERS



*Ministry of Justice  
Ministry of Children and Family Development  
Gaming Commission*

Allen and Loreen Vandekerkhove Family Foundation

#### Individual Donations

- June Preston - "In Loving Memory of Mel Brooks"
- Paul MacRae
- Douglas & Pat Woodall

*Our thanks to all who financially supported our organization*