

Aspires Housing Group of Calgary

Minutes from Meeting of Thursday, September 5, 2019, 7-9pm

The Ability Hub, Sinneave Family Foundation

Guest Speaker: AL, Autism Co-Housing Community Fundraising Campaign: 'A Call to Action'

AL is looking for families to support a 'Call to Action.' He wants to raise awareness around a proposed housing model for individuals with ASD through an electronic petition. He feels that timing is key because of the election this fall, making this the ideal time to bring new ideas to the political parties.

A co-Housing concept is based on creating a community within a smaller development where people can take care of each other. Families and individuals would be engaged in the entire process. Cost savings can be realized by leveraging resources from within (labour, business expertise, resources). Funds could be accessed through grant proposals. The budget and scope of work would be dependent on the number of individuals and families interested in the project. Land and building selection/design would be loosely described in early planning. A first priority would be to set up a charitable foundation.

The Aspires families present generally supported the idea of raising awareness and money from federal sources. Some families would like more detail and there was concern that if they signed a petition to support a specific party were they obligated to vote for that party. John Seigner (via phone) noted other ways to influence government and how to access grant money and leverage federal support.

John Seigner offered to meet with AL when John returns to the office and will discuss in person with AL the ideas and how to proceed. John will also help connect him to MP Kent Hehr.

Business Meeting:

- Additions to the agenda: March of Dimes update
- Approval of June 6th meeting minutes: No minutes to approve. The Wills and Estates presentation is on the Aspires website.
- Project updates and New Developments: Carolyn Dudley (Project Facilitator)
 - **Horizon View:** All agencies connected to Horizon View receive notification of units coming available. Recent offerings of units came available but were taken quickly, and there will be additional units coming available at some point and we need to be ready. Individuals interested in Horizon View are asked to place their name on a wait list with housinginfo@sinneavefoundation.org, at that point it is best to have an initial assessment done by Monarch House at a cost of \$120. This will allow Monarch House to submit names when units become available immediately as requests for a unit must occur in a very short time (within a week or so) of learning of available units. Horizon View is considered an affordable housing provider but most units are not income scaled. Rent is in the area of \$800/month and the Light Support Package by Monarch (required) is \$60 per month. If you are interested connect with John, Carolyn or Lorraine to learn more.

- **Sisters of Charity:** This residence was previously pursued for higher needs individuals but did not proceed. Now, this has resurfaced for those with low support needs. The Supported Independent Living Team at Sinneave is working to find an agency that may offer light supports in this residence. The building is zoned as a "Lodging Unit" which means tenants must self evacuate and would therefore be highly independent individuals. The building has 10 individual to rent units with their own bathrooms but no kitchen. The building has a communal kitchen and dining area.
- **Connecting Roommates:** The SIL team is discussing the use of facebook as a way for roommates to connect. Aspires Calgary is a closed Facebook page and there is another facebook page called Autism Connections that may be useful. Details on roommate posting will follow once a decision is made.
- **Purpose Built Homes (Ed Larkcom):** The SIL team is working on finding a Calgary agency to match with Ed.
 - Ed works with agencies to custom build/develop to their tenants' needs. He builds and operates up to 3 storey multi-level buildings for approx 20-30 people. Tenants with different levels of supports live in the same building. Common space is a priority in all of Ed's projects and they are sized to fit into residential neighbourhoods.

Aspires website and 'Connects' (Carolyn Dudley)

Please visit Aspires.ca. Past meeting minutes are on the Meetings tab, in each meeting is a note book icon and this is where the minutes are located. The Events tab provides information about upcoming events such as Autism Alliance on October 11th which will include a housing panel. Past speaker presentations are found at The Resources tab. Under the Contact tab there is a link to the Housing team email: housinginfo@sinneavefoundation.org If you have suggestions for additional resources please email us with suggestions.

- **Aspires 'Connects' :** We need families to join the 'Connects' database. This is the tool used to help understand your housing needs and timing and enable us to connect with you with opportunities! It is a secure database that registers information about your specific housing situation. The Sinneave Family Foundation will also use the data to inform policy.
 - If you are new to Aspires: when you join the mailing list you will receive a 'Welcome' email with a link to the 'Connects' database. If you do not receive a welcome email within a day please check your junk box and allow the Aspires emails.
 - If you are already an Aspires member, go to Aspires 'Connects' information on the 'about' page <http://aspres.ca/about/> to access the link to Connects and enter your information into the database.
- Social Update:
 - **August 11th bowling:** A small group enjoyed bowling at The National on 10th. Some Aspires members found the background music was too loud but the bowling and food were enjoyed.

- **Next event:** Family Potluck during November or December? Our potluck attendance has grown. One of our Aspires members is taking on the Potluck organization but we need help from you at the Potluck as well. Please consider volunteering for the next potluck, it would be great to have several people. Once we have a date set we will send out more information.
- New Business: An Aspires parent (L.L.) is looking to advocate to PDD Calgary Region to find capacity for 'Entrust Disability Services, Edmonton' to provide PDD funded supports in Calgary. <https://www.entrustdisabilityservices.ca/#>
- Family Round Table: Families and individuals in attendance introduce themselves and describe the housing solution they feel would best fit for them.
- For many people this was their first Aspires meeting.
- A number of families/individuals are actively looking for housing options.
- March of Dimes (M.O.D.) update: Larry Scarbeau of M.O.D. was present and announced they have added capacity in Edmonton and are currently completing PDD Calgary region accreditation in preparation for providing services in Calgary.
- Bill Locke is working on a new initiative with the City of Calgary to look at housing for individuals with ASD. He will be added to the October meeting's agenda.
- Next Meeting: Save the Date for **Thursday October 3rd, 2019. 7-9 p.m.**