

Aspires June 4, 7pm-9pm 2020

Virtual Meeting Notes

Welcome and “Disclaimer”: Richard Conte and Bonnie Kaplan, (Co-chairs): Using Zoom is enabling Aspires families who cannot attend in person to participate so we expect to use Zoom for all Aspires meetings from now on. Zoom also enables us to have guest speakers from outside the local area, which is another advantage of this technology.

If guest speakers agree to be recorded, we will do so – then we can post their talks for our larger membership. However, please be aware that some of the audience questions, comments, or even images may be captured on a Zoom recording of a speaker.

The Zoom recording will always be turned off after the guest speakers’ finish. Aspires participants can continue to engage in the meeting and share their own personal situations (if you want to) with the other Aspires members in attendance. These discussions will not be recorded, so your privacy is assured.

Minutes: No changes or edits were brought forward therefore, they are assumed approved from the last meeting. (June 4, 2020)

Guest Speakers: Dean Svoboda from Autism Asperger’s Friendship Society (AAFS) and Lyndon Parakin from Autism Calgary

Dean Svoboda: AAFS: AAFS will not re-open in person this summer but are committed to their 800-member group to continue to offer on line programs and supports. AAFS is aware of opening requirement recommendations and are working hard towards re-opening in person, being careful to protect all volunteers and member appropriately is a priority.

Dean encouraged all to reach out to AAFS on what they need and that AAFS is for all ages including adults. AAFS is not closed, but is offering programs on Facebook and Instagram. AAFS has trained staff available to talk with you and to help if you do not understand how to use specific on-line platforms and programs.

Dean explained the many on-line programs that are running now that include: Work out videos with trained athletes on You Tube, Netflix parties 2x a month where members watch a movie together and can chat, Dance Parties, Healthy Habits about taking care of yourself, VAULT calls - an adult program with weekly calls with members, Dungeons and Dragons, and Jack Box Parties with online board games where all members play together.

Virtual programs are allowing more people to be involved and AAFS are getting many more participating now especially those who were unable to come in person.

If you need help to use the technology, you can contact Brittany at AAFS. brittany@aafscalgary.com

The aafscalgary.com webpage shows all the programs offered.

Lyndon Parakin: Autism Calgary: Services at AC are all offered remotely for now. Support groups will continue to run virtually all summer. AC staff have been very busy during this time and in addition to the regular support offered are building relationships with federal, provincial, and municipal governments and participating in numerous grant opportunities.

Some of the projects include: 1) New Horizons for seniors for aging caregivers and autistic seniors to build resources and understand needs of the aging autistic adult. 2) Domestic violence support and aggression in the home 3) Spectrum Advantage for employment 4) Partnership with Ready Willing and Able 5) Talk support to increase capacity to provide phone counselling 6) COVID response initiative for the province called Response and Recovery project to continue to support members with proactive calls 7) Homespace/downtown housing project in collaboration with AAFS and Sinneave 8) AIDE Canada a federally funded platform to locate all autism resources across the lifespan in one place and offer peer counselling, AC will oversee the Prairie Hub specifically 9) Multicultural presentations 10) ASD Community Network where autism providers meet to share information 11) Autism Alberta Alliance with the provincial government participating in review of protocols on COVID that impact the ASD community like; triage ethical guidelines, PPE, Alberta education and housing models to combine government options with family managed input.

March of Dimes Canada (MODC), Larry Scarbeau: Larry Scarbeau gave an update about March of Dimes expansion in the Edmonton area with 11 group homes now funded by Government of Nunavut for high needs, complex adults with all disabilities including autism. Most homes are group homes for living with 3 people but there are some individual apartments. MOD will continue to support Calgary in developing housing solutions.

Project Updates by John Seigner:

Horizon View: The estimated move-in date is approximately mid-July. If you are interested, please get in touch with us as soon as possible by emailing: housinginfo@sinneavefoundation.org there are a few units left.

HomeSpace Projects: There are 2 low-income projects in development for fall. Expressions of Interest (EOI) were submitted April 30th and both EOI's have been accepted by HomeSpace.

- **Crescent Heights:** This project remains on hold during COVID and there are no new updates since the last meeting. Regular communication is going out to all who previously expressed interest. If you are interested and not received the regular, communications please contact us at the housinginfo@sinneavefoundation.org. Located at 238-5th Avenue N.E. This small apartment building will have 10 units available; suitable for relatively independent individuals who can live in their own apartment. Scope will provide 24/7 supports in the building to tenants who receive PDD funding. For individuals interested in the building who do not receive PDD funding, Scope is developing a fee-for-service model to provide supports as needed.
- **The Beltline Project (Downtown):** There is no update at this time. A meeting with Sinneave, AAFS and Autism Calgary will be set in the next weeks to determine status. The Downtown project is located at 5th Avenue and 9th Street is a 74- unit apartment building with commercial space on the main level and a second floor community kitchen and patio. The building will also be home to other HomeSpace tenants. This site will have some concierge support available to tenants who are independent but could benefit from a light level of support. AAFS will be

organizing a monthly social event. ASD tenants may reach out to Autism Calgary who will be the contact agency for them.

Summer Social

The summer social event this year is postponed for now due to COVID-19.

Family Round Table:

Approximately forty members participated in Zoom, some shared their housing situations.

Suggestions for guest speakers are always welcome. Please email your ideas to housinginfo@sinneavefoundation.org

Next Aspires meeting tentatively scheduled Thursday August 6, 7pm-9pm via Zoom.