



SUPPORTS FOR COMMUNITY LIVING

SUPPORTS POUR L'INTÉGRATION
COMMUNAUTAIRE

Annual
General Meeting
June 28, 2021
7:00 pm
Via Video Conference

Our Vision

Every person we support will have a full and meaningful life, which means having a home, relationships of all kinds, and a variety of socially valued roles.

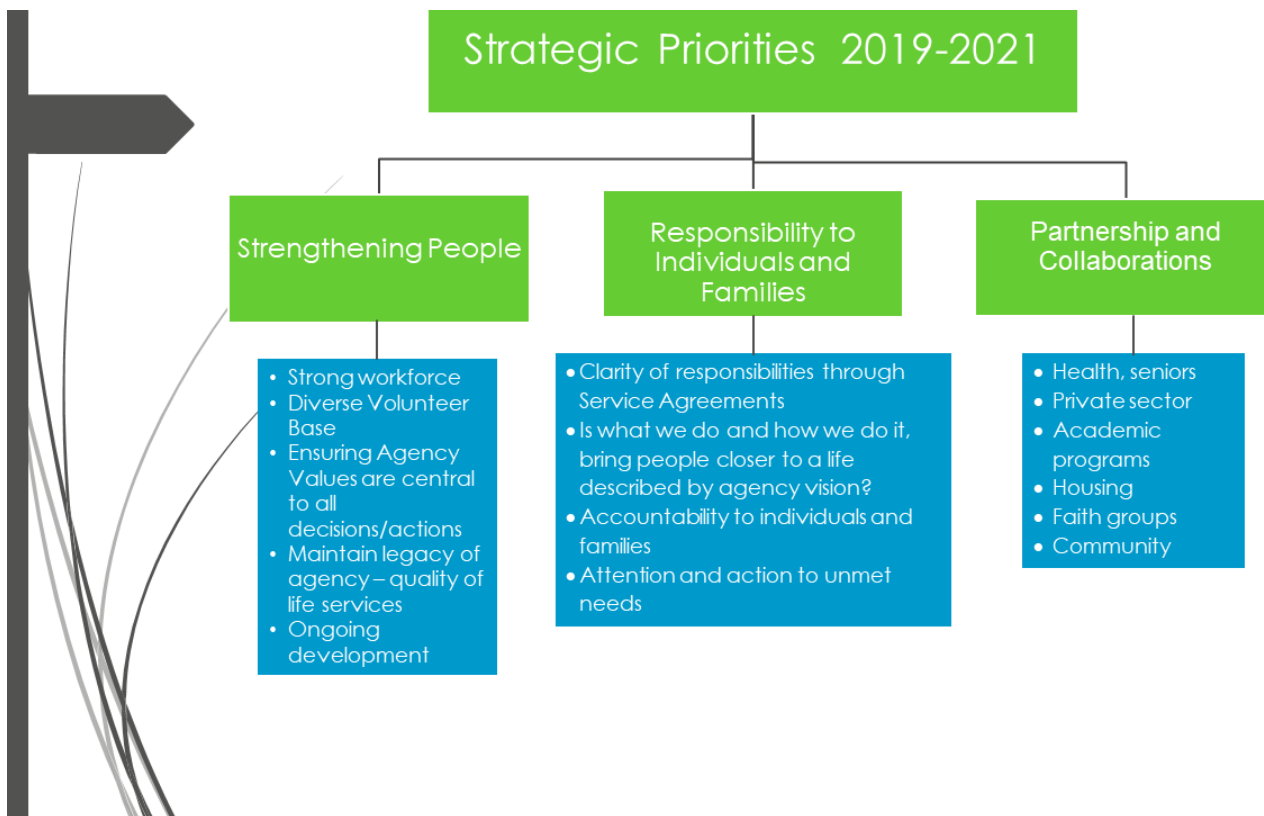
Report of the Chair of the Board and Executive Director

As we all know, this past year brought unprecedented challenges. The Pandemic was an unexpected layer of new experiences, many unknowns which caused anxiety, change in lifestyle and daily routines, and the demonstration of creativity, innovation and commitment beyond the high standard that typically is present in the agency.

Regarding the pandemic, the agency worked closely with Public Health and our colleagues to develop a Risk Assessment tool, plan for contingencies, collaborate for vaccination planning.

The effects of this pandemic on those living in congregate settings and to those in marginalized populations will be seen for many years to come. The individuals we support faced increased isolation from their families and their community in order to battle the threat of Covid. Rygiel did all it could to minimize this negative impact, but always adhered to the requirements of Public Health and our Ministry.

The Pandemic generated substantial additional work, but, despite that, all other work continued and much was accomplished. The tasks set out in the Strategic Pillars Workplan were addressed and much was accomplished.



November 2019

Under the pillar of Strengthening People, a number of employee related tasks have been underway. Firstly, we undertook a comprehensive external audit of our Human Resources needs and department. Details of this audit and its recommendations are set out in a separate report.

We entered into a partnership with the Immigrant Workers' Center which provides PSW training and placements with Rygiel. This role has us providing some input into their training program bringing a community perspective, brings students for placement experiences into our agency. These students provide additional support and it gives Rygiel an opportunity to assess for appropriateness for employment.

Our Mentorship program was renewed. A comprehensive review of all mandatory online training was undertaken. Updates have been developed and for most of the material, an accessible, modified version is also being created to address specific needs of people supported and staff.

Our Job Aid Manuals for Support Staff, Service Coordinators, and Maintenance staff were all updated.

Other work included a continuation of a Management Leadership Development Series which included group sessions and individual coaching. The agency has a strong commitment to professional development and these sessions will be ongoing.

While the emphasis of this work addresses the “Strengthening People” pillar, much of the work also addresses one or both of the other pillars “Responsibility to Individuals and Families” and/or “Partnerships and Collaborations”.

With a primary focus on “Responsibility to Individuals and Families”, a review and update of Service Agreements was completed which also included an update of all consents. Our partnership with Community Living Ontario continued through the Family Engagement Initiative.

Unfortunately, some of the events for families were interrupted by the pandemic. Although some virtual sessions were held, families preferred to wait until we can come together in person. Planning proceeded with other organizations within the partnership for the work that can happen once restrictions are lifted.

Accommodation Planning is an ongoing part of our work – helping those receiving support to have a home that meets their needs. The staff have been working with the Rygiel Homes Housing Corporation Board and the City of Hamilton to advance the stages needed to build new homes on the Cranbrook property.

There have been service opportunities created in the agency due to five deaths and one woman choosing to move to a new community. With an aging population within the service, a number of seniors passed away. Each of them had more than 40 years of support from the agency and had complex health issues. They were supported throughout the stages of their lives enjoying a good home, friends and family and a community lifestyle based on individual interests. With family, friends and the agency, they each came to the final stage peacefully and in the comfort of loved ones.

Due to the pandemic, it was difficult to properly welcome new people into the service. Restrictions on spending time with people prevented everyone from moving through the steps that help determine compatibility and properly plan for appropriate support. One individual was welcomed into service and as we move into the new fiscal year, we are hoping that restrictions will be reduced thereby, enabling us to actively meet those who have been referred and to proceed with the planning process.

The Ministry has been very accommodating with both agencies and families in extending timelines during the pandemic. The usual routine of getting to know an individual by first meeting them and their supports outside the home and then setting up a series of visits to the home was not possible. Some meetings and visits were done by Zoom but these were challenging for some individuals who do not process information virtually. For some families, the restrictions of the pandemic caused great difficulty. The agency responded by trying to be as individualized and flexible as possible while still following the restrictions when individuals are transitioning in to our service.

The suspension of the community participation and respite programs were also very difficult for participants and their families. Families struggled to continue to care for their family members without the rest these supports provide. Rygiel supported these families by continuing to reach out with phone calls, offering our virtual programs and delivering small gifts to lift spirits. Regular communication from the agency was sent out to keep families up to date. Both services have created re - opening plans that will be ready to support individuals and their families once direction is received to do so from MCCSS and Public Health.

The Board of Directors participated in a professional development session on Recruitment for Boards. This provided a renewal on the criteria and approach to ensure recruitment of volunteers for the Board that are compatible with the vision and mission of the agency and have the necessary skills to complement the current composition of the Board.

The agency continued throughout the fiscal year, to actively participate in many committees and working groups within the sector locally and provincially - all which work towards enhancing supports and services to individuals and their families.

Our local Ministry is an important partner and we are grateful for the assistance and collaboration we experience with the local staff and those that were team members on the West Region Planning Table.

As the pandemic continues into the new fiscal year, we are hopeful that efforts by individuals, Public Health and government will bring a healthier and more normative lifestyle and that early in the New Year, we can lift restrictions and resume the full supports to individuals and families.

Human Resources

More than ever, Rygiel continued, through the pandemic, to continue to deliver a high standard of support. This, we attribute to the commitment of our staff. Throughout the pandemic, our employees not only ensured a continuity of support, they responded effectively to the unique needs of the individuals to manage the change in routines, understand the required protocols related to the pandemic and staff found wonderful ways to address the emotional needs of the people they supported that were challenged by the pandemic. Their ingenuity and dedication carried everyone through these challenging times.

To assist and support staff, the agency held weekly meetings with Team Leaders, offered focus groups for all staff, and introduced "Not Myself Today", a mental health program available to all staff and people supported.

The key activity in this department was the undertaking of an audit which addressed the following:

- What are the current required (employer obligations under legislation) functions of the department
- Beyond these (required) functions what are elements of work that the agency would like to add to the department to strengthen its workforce
- Look at the information flow – is it effective or requires change
- To accomplish the above, what structure and skill set is required within the department

The audit was conducted by Career Compass. It provided us with recommendations to increase capacity of the department and to structure the work within defined roles. As a result, the department has been increased by one full time position. By year end, recruitment was underway and the consultant continues to help with the implementation of the recommendations.

One of the important traditions in the history of our agency has been the value and provision of learning opportunities. Throughout the fiscal year, the mandated online training continued and a review of the program began. A team from within the agency began assessing each component to determine if updates were needed or recommended. This work continued into the new fiscal year.

While the pandemic limited some of the non-mandated training, the agency was able to offer and/or participate in the following by using online or virtual means:

- Orientation for new staff
- Pharmacology
- Mandatory controlled acts training
- NVC1
- Pandemic procedures training with emphasis on infection control
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Training for Management staff, Team Leaders, Labour Management Committee members
- Anti-Racism training
- Medical Safeguards training
- Social Role Valorization and Additional Perspectives on Topics That Are Central to Good Service
- Dementia support and geriatric care update
- Power of Relations
- Trauma Informed Care
- Conscious Care and Support
- We also had 2 staff participate and complete a comprehensive program in Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. As a result, they contribute to the community FASD Resource Team, provide internal consultations as relevant and lead training sessions on FASD
- We also supported an employee to become a qualified and certified trainer of Conscious Care and Support – an extensive development program
- Redevelopment and pilot of the Guiding Approach

We are grateful for the technology that enabled us to participate in the above programs.

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April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021*

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