



THE LITERACY GROUP

# **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020/2021**

**Virtual Meeting  
Thursday, June 24, 2021**

## MISSION

The Literacy Group's mission is to guide and empower people in Waterloo Region by building skills and unlocking potential—changing lives one word, one number, and one click at a time.

## VISION

The Literacy Group's vision is that everyone in Waterloo Region, regardless of ability, culture or status, will have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to realize their potential and to flourish.



## VALUES

- We offer innovative and learner-centered responses to the challenges our students bring us.
- We demonstrate a patient and collaborative approach to learning.
- We provide an inclusive and compassionate environment for all.

**Literacy Group of Waterloo Region  
Agenda Annual General Meeting  
Thursday, June 24, 2021  
Online**

**Agenda**

**Board Business**

**6:00 – 6:45**

**1.1 Call to Order, Quorum - Crystal Brown**

**1.2 Approval of the 2019 -2020 AGM Minutes - Crystal Brown**

**1.3 Approval of the Auditor's report for 2020-2021 Fiscal -  
Chris Prosser**

**1.4 Vote to appoint the Auditors for 2021-2022 Fiscal -  
Chris Prosser**

**1.5 Ratify election of the 2021-2022 Board Directors -  
Crystal Brown**

**1.6 Ratify/Elect Board officer positions- 2021-2022 - Crystal  
Brown**

**Motion to approve "slated candidates"**

April Souwand

Margot McCurry

**Retiring Board Members**

Andrew Swatridge

Diana Elkin

**Sadly Leaving Us**

Julie Sigrist

**Motion to Dismiss AGM - 7:15 - Crystal Brown**

\*Pre-read information for this item posted on OneDrive

**The Literacy Group of Waterloo Region  
Minutes of Annual General Meeting  
Wednesday, June 24, 2020  
Virtual Session**

**Board Business**

**6:30 - 7:00 p.m.**

- 1.1 Call to Order, Quorum - Andrew Swatridge,**  
**Present on call:** Andrew Swatridge, Chris Prosser, Prashanth Promod, Crystal Brown, Patti Lewis, ZaraBint Dawood, Wendy To, Sonya Cosman, Diana Elkin, John Dale, Max Neang, Divya Sarin
- Regrets:** Angie Hesselink
- 1.2 Approval of Minutes of the 2018 - 2019 AGM Minutes - Andrew Swatridge**  
**Motion to approve:** John Dale  
**Seconded by:** Patti Lewis  
**Motion Carries**
- 1.3 Approval of the Auditor's report for 2019 -2020 Fiscal - Chris Prosser**  
**Action Item:** Three additional items required from auditors - additional fraudulent measures  
**Motion to approve:** Crystal Brown  
**Seconded by:** Wendy To  
**Motion Carries**
- 1.4 Vote to appoint the Auditors for 2020 - 2021 Fiscal - Chris Prosser**  
Same auditors as previous years  
**Motion to approve:** Wendy To  
**Seconded by:** John Dale  
**Motion Carries**

**1.5 Ratify election of the 2020 - 2021 Board of Directors - Andrew Swatridge**

**Elected:** Divya Sarin  
Zara Bint Dawood  
Max Neang  
Prashanth Promod

**Motion to approve:** Patti Lewis

**Seconded by:** Crystal Brown

**Motion Carries**

**1.6 Ratify/Elect Board officer positions 2020 - 2021 - Andrew Swatridge**

Crystal Brown - President  
Sonya Cosman - Vice President  
Max Neang - Treasurer  
Andrew Swatridge - Secretary

**Motion Carries**

**Motion to Dismiss at 7:00 p.m.- Andrew Swatridge**

**Motion to approve:** Crystal Brown

**Seconded by:** Zara Bing Dawood

**Motion Carries**

\*Pre-read information for this item posted on OneDrive

## BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Who would have thought that this past year would see so much change in our social environments, let alone in the way we continue to work and learn? The crisis of the novel coronavirus kept us all removed from the normalcy of our day-to-day lives. We continued to have all learning online through remote tutoring sessions using Zoom.

Thank you to the Ministry of Labour, Skills and Training Development the United Way Waterloo Region Communities, Cambridge Bingo, and the many donors who continue to believe in the importance of the work being done at The Literacy Group of Waterloo Region.

Thank you to the fundraising committee. It was a tough year coming up with plans and executing them in the midst of a pandemic, but we were able to innovate and be creative. TLG is in the midst of a Water Barrel fundraiser and we will hold our annual Read-a-Thon in the upcoming year.

I would like to thank the Board Members for their time, expertise, and dedication in a year of remote sessions. We must, however, provide special thanks to the following retiring board members:

Diana Elkin who has served on the board for the last six years and has contributed to the fundraising committee, and who has provided several fundraising sessions on Personal Cybersecurity. She will be staying on the fundraising committee as a volunteer member. Thank you.

Andrew Swatridge is also leaving the board after committing to six years on the board. He has provided detailed expertise in Human Resources, has served as Secretary to the Board for the last year, President of the Board for the previous two years before that, and as a director for an additional three years. Thank you for your work.

Diana and Andrew have committed many years of service to The Literacy Group. They will certainly be missed, but we know that they have contributed to our community through this service and will continue to promote literacy initiatives in our community.

I would like to thank the students for their ongoing commitments to their learning, learning technology, setting and reaching goals, for persevering, and for staying the course. It is through these skills that you will achieve whatever you set out to do in your lives, using your knowledge, skills and hopefully improved confidence to realize your potential and to flourish during this time.

To the volunteers supporting these students, again, a heartfelt thank you for all that you do. There was much learning for you to use online tools, to continue to motivate our learners while keeping abreast of the many changes that is remote learning.

Finally, a special thank you to Chris Prosser, our Executive Director, who has navigated these unusual circumstances over the course of the pandemic with his usual sense of humour and continued advocacy of all those around him, from the staff to the volunteers, to the learners. Your creativity, perseverance and practicality kept TLG operations going during this most unusual of years.

The work completed at TLG over the last year has been incredible given these immense changes brought about by the novel coronavirus and the repeated lockdowns in both Waterloo Region and Ontario. I want to thank everyone for your continued support of The Literacy Group, and we hope that we can return to in-person learning to further support those learners in need in our community in the fall. In health and learning!

Respectfully submitted,

**CRYSTAL BROWN**

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

I have always believed that I work with some of the finest staff and volunteers in the country. Their calibre of creativity, level of experience and plethora of skills is unmatched. When the pandemic restrictions started in March 2020, TLG staff and volunteers said, "No! This is not going to stop the learning." Staff took risks and worked hard--often overtime--to stay connected to learners we were at risk of losing in the mounting turmoil, and to maintain learning momentum. If you think any student was lost without a fight, you would be greatly mistaken. Staff and volunteers moved mountains to make learning accessible to students and keep it going. I am always proud of the learners and their achievements, but this year I am especially proud of the staff and volunteers who didn't stop, who made it work, and are the reason TLG did so well in the most difficult year it has ever faced.

This year the Kitchener office said a sad goodbye to our Frederick St. home, which had served us for over 15 years. However, we are very happy with our new home on Victoria Ave., and we now have a much bigger parking lot. The move during a pandemic was successful thanks to staff and a group of volunteers who were packing and painting right up to moving week.

TLG has achieved success by surpassing many targets, often exceeding the average results of Literacy and Basic Skills providers in the Western Region and the province. We knew that hitting our "Learners Served" targets was going to be hard; however, Kitchener reached 78% of the target, which is very close to the Ontario average of 81% and the regional average of 83%. Our Cambridge site achieved quality over quantity by surpassing provincial and regional targets in overall quality standards.

TLG's success over the past year can be attributed to the speed, inventiveness and learner focus with which TLG moved to support learners at the start of the pandemic. Within the first month after the initial lockdown, TLG developed Zoom classrooms and Google-based intake and assessment processes to support the learners who



could learn online. For the learners who could not, barriers were assessed and addressed where possible with Training Supports (computer equipment, software and training) and referrals. Based on needs assessments that we conducted for all students at the start of the pandemic, we developed a variety of learning options: online, phone, print resource mailings and safe drop-offs.

A major boon to learning for TLG learners has been the online TLG Learner Portal. This Google Site, with links to learning and information websites appropriate for literacy learners, was created by TLG staff in partnership with Employment Ontario-funded AlphaPlus. Thus far, the site has served over 1000 people in far-flung regions.

We recognized that obtaining revenue through traditional means was not going to be possible during COVID, and we were lucky to be eligible for federal business relief. Over the past year, the TLG team has worked hard to successfully deliver grant-funded programs, and everyone has taken part in awareness-raising and fundraising events. This has enabled TLG to hit its donation revenue targets.

The pandemic will certainly change the way TLG delivers its programs going forward. But TLG will continue to deliver high-quality, accessible programs for those adults with the lowest skill levels, to unlock their potential and change lives one word, one number, and one click at a time.

Respectfully submitted,

**CHRIS PROSSER**

## FUNDRAISING CHAIR'S REPORT

I'm very happy to provide this year-end report on behalf of the members of The Literacy Group's 2020-2021 Fund Creation Committee.

The past year presented many challenges. The fund creation committee was forced to pivot toward a fully virtual fundraising model due to COVID 19 restrictions. I'm extremely proud of the efforts of the committee. In these unprecedented times they managed to raise \$2,382.00 in support of the work we do throughout Waterloo Region. Although we fell short of our pre-COVID targets we found ways to continue moving forward. Our major fundraiser, Rodding for Reading, was cancelled and so too was our yard sale. Additionally, other events that TLG has traditionally participated in such as, The Race to Erase and Reading Rumble did not happen.

The Fund Creation Committee took up the challenge to create a virtual fundraiser in the form of The Community Strong Read - A - Thon. Staff, Board Members, and Friends of TLG all came together to share in their love of reading. Participants sought sponsors for achieving reading targets and participating in reading challenges over a three-week period. In addition to the Read-A-Thon, Diana Elkin from the committee hosted our first ever Cyber-Security webinar. This event shared important tips for helping participants maintain a safe and secure online presence.

The year ahead will continue to be challenging, but we hope to see the end of restrictions on in person events soon. In the meantime, the Fund Creation Committee continues to seek out creative fundraising ideas. This year saw a new event in the form of a Rain Barrel sale. Additionally, a second even more successful Cyber-Security webinar recently took place. Finally, the committee continues to plan for future events. In closing, I want to thank everyone on the Committee for your hard work in the past year and for everything you're doing now to continue to rise to these trying times, and create events that will generate financial support for The Literacy Group in 2021-2022.

Respectfully submitted,

**ANGIE HESSELINK**

## TREASURER'S REPORT

I am happy to report on the financial performance of The Literacy Group of Waterloo Region for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2021.

This has been a challenging year for TLG due to the effects of Covid-19 on our ability to fundraise but we have seen great support coming from Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, support from United Way, and the generous donations made. With this support we were able to maintain a fund balance of \$131,467 (2020 - 128,448). Despite a challenging year TLG was able to budget appropriately for expenses and was able to generate a surplus of \$6,743 (2020 - \$13,975).

With the support received and careful budgeting of expenses, we were able to face the challenge caused by Covid-19 this year. Looking forward into fiscal 2022 we are optimistic that we can slowly return to the norm as Covid-19 restrictions ease, but will continue to monitor the situation and ensure our budgets and spending is appropriate.

I would like to thank all the staff and Board members for their efforts this year and being able to adapt to the ever changing landscape and I am looking forward to seeing TLG's continuing success into the future.

Respectfully submitted,

**MAX NEANG**



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## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

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To the Members of The Literacy Group of Waterloo Region

### *Opinion*

We have audited the financial statements of The Literacy Group of Waterloo Region (the Organization), which comprise the statements of financial position as at March 31, 2021 and 2020, and the statements of revenue and expenditures, changes in net assets and cash flows for the years then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Organization as at March 31, 2021 and 2020, and the results of its operations and cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (ASNPO).

### *Basis for Opinion*

#### *Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements*

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with ASNPO, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Organization's financial reporting process.

#### *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements*

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

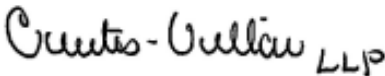
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Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of The Literacy Group of Waterloo Region *(continued)*

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Organization's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Guelph, Ontario  
June 17, 2021

  
CURTIS-VILLAR LLP  
Chartered Professional Accountants  
Licensed Public Accountants

## THE LITERACY GROUP OF WATERLOO REGION

## Statement of Financial Position

As at March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Cash-unrestricted	\$ 146,691	\$ 108,482
Cash-restricted (Note 3)	16,741	16,614
Term deposit (Note 4)	10,000	10,000
Accounts receivable	17,885	5,461
Prepaid expenses	12,083	11,285
	<u>203,400</u>	<u>151,842</u>
PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT (Note 5)	21,621	32,891
	<u>\$ 225,021</u>	<u>\$ 184,733</u>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (Note 7)	\$ 39,095	\$ 38,431
Deferred revenue (Note 6)	44,151	-
	<u>83,246</u>	<u>38,431</u>
DEFERRED REVENUE (Notes 6, 9)	10,308	17,855
	<u>93,554</u>	<u>56,286</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Lottery Fund (Note 1)	16,093	16,093
General Fund (Note 1)	113,824	99,534
Capital Asset Fund (Note 1)	1,550	12,820
	<u>131,467</u>	<u>128,447</u>
	<u>\$ 225,021</u>	<u>\$ 184,733</u>



**THE LITERACY GROUP OF WATERLOO REGION**  
**Statement of Revenue and Expenditures**  
**Year Ended March 31, 2021**

	Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development - Kitchener (Externally restricted) 2021	Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development - Cambridge (Externally restricted) 2021	Lottery Fund (Externally restricted) 2021	General Fund (Unrestricted) 2021	Total 2021	Total 2020
<b>REVENUE</b>						
Grants	\$ 245,428	\$ 129,680	\$ -	\$ 16,199	\$ 391,307	\$ 423,777
United Way	-	-	-	78,875	78,875	36,021
Fundraising	-	-	15,627	2,448	18,075	44,569
Donations	-	-	-	9,111	9,111	10,699
Other income	-	-	-	3,108	3,108	54,110
Book sales	-	-	-	-	-	119
	<b>245,428</b>	<b>129,680</b>	<b>15,627</b>	<b>109,741</b>	<b>500,476</b>	<b>569,295</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>						
Salaries and benefits (Note 9)	185,709	85,415	14,262	56,219	341,605	380,004
Rent, maintenance and utilities	30,723	24,000	-	-	54,723	52,532
Office and general	27,055	6,493	237	7,186	40,971	24,372
Resources	138	16	-	38,216	38,370	44,365
Amortization (Note 5)	4,112	3,435	-	-	7,547	7,547
Professional fees	3,152	3,152	-	-	6,304	4,626
Telephone	2,956	2,944	-	-	5,900	5,762
Training	2,992	1,509	-	-	4,501	6,773
Field support	1,577	1,425	-	-	3,002	15,394
Professional development and memberships	1,304	-	335	1,298	2,937	2,098
Fundraising expenditures	-	-	793	79	872	7,893
Travel	-	-	-	-	-	1,358
	<b>259,718</b>	<b>128,389</b>	<b>15,627</b>	<b>102,998</b>	<b>506,732</b>	<b>552,724</b>

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**THE LITERACY GROUP OF WATERLOO REGION**  
**Statement of Revenue and Expenditures (continued)**  
**Year Ended March 31, 2021**

	Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development - Kitchener (Externally restricted) 2021	Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development - Cambridge (Externally restricted) 2021	Lottery Fund (Externally restricted) 2021	General Fund (Unrestricted) 2021	Total 2021	Total 2020
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURES FROM OPERATIONS</b>	(14,290)	1,291	-	6,743	(6,256)	16,571
<b>OTHER INCOME</b>						
Reimbursement (Repayment) of MLTSD	14,290	(1,291)	-	-	12,999	(2,596)
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURES</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,743	\$ 6,743	\$ 13,975



**THE LITERACY GROUP OF WATERLOO REGION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
2020-2021**

**Crystal Brown, President**

**Sonya Cosman, Vice President**

**Max Neang, Treasurer**

**Andrew Swatridge , Secretary**

**Angie Hesselink**

**April Souwand**

**Diana Elkin**

**Divya Sarin**

**Margot McCurry**

**Max Neang**

**Prashanth Promod**

**Zara Bint Dawood**

**RETIRING BOARD MEMBERS**

**Andrew Swatridge**

**Diana Elkin**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS POSITION CHANGE FOR JUNE 2021**

**Andrew Swatridge, Secretary**

Replaced by: **April Souwand**

**SLATE OF BOARD CANDIDATES**

**April Souwand**

**Margot McCurry**

## **THE LITERACY GROUP STAFF**

### **2020-2021**

**Chris Prosser**

Executive Director

**Lisa McArthur**

Program Manager

**Marian Baron**

Bookkeeper

**Sue Damon**

Intake & Program Coordinator, Kitchener

**Laurie Mazur**

Intake and Modular Program Coordinator, Cambridge

**Julie Sigrist**

Group Facilitator, Cambridge

**Johanna Brown**

Group Facilitator, Kitchener

**John Stackhouse**

Group Facilitator, Kitchener/Cambridge

**Joyce Baker**

Administrative Assistant, Kitchener

**Marilena Benak**

Administrative Assistant & Public Relations Coordinator, Cambridge

## **APRIL SOUWAND**

April has been a volunteer tutor for The Literacy Group for almost two decades. She has recently retired from her career as a professional land use planner, and now dedicates some of her free time to helping out on The Literacy Group board of directors, in addition to being a one-on-one tutor. With her experience and education as a municipal land use planner, some of her key skills include communication and policy development. She is very passionate about the importance of literacy in our society, which she feels has become even more important in the digital age. Some of her other pursuits include golf, dog agility, horseback riding and travel.

## **MARGOT MCCURRY**

Margot has had a lifelong passion for literacy. As an educator and as a volunteer, she has experienced the joys and rewards of assisting students become confident readers and writers. She is a graduate of University of Waterloo, Carleton and Western and continues to be a “life long learner”. She has participated in many boards and volunteer associations including Soroptimists International. As a board member, Margot seeks to support the work of the team at The Literacy Group. She enjoys many outdoor activities, especially those involving water.



THE LITERACY GROUP

### ADDRESS

Kitchener

**300 Victoria Street**

Cambridge

**40 Ainslie, 2nd Floor**

### PHONE

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Cambridge - **519-621-7993**