



## Annual General Meeting – September 16, 2020

### Webinar Transcription Document

#### Video 1: Lisa Browne

Hi there, my name is Lisa Browne, CEO of Stella's Circle. Now usually, we would be in a room full of people talking about our Annual General Meeting. This year we're going to do it virtually, but I promise you'll still see lots of impact that Stella's Circle had this past year.

We're going to start off with a land acknowledgement.

#### Video 2: Denise Hillier:

Hi, I'm Denise Hillier, Director of Clinical Services at Stella's Circle. I'm here at our Community Support Program, where programs and services did not stop for one day during our State of Emergency and COVID-19. This is thanks to a courageous team who continue to go above and beyond to support adults with complex mental health needs in our community, by completing medication deliveries on snowshoes and maintaining in-home visits in the early days of the pandemic.

We respectfully acknowledge the territory in which we gather as the ancestral homelands of the Beothuk, and the island of Newfoundland as the ancestral homelands of the Mi'kmaq and Beothuk. We would also like to recognize the Inuit of Nunatsiavut and NunatuKavut and the Innu of Nitassinan, and their ancestors, as the original people of Labrador. We strive for respectful relationships with all the peoples of this province as we search for collective healing and true reconciliation and honour this beautiful land together.

#### Video 3: Lisa Browne:

Thank you.

The vision of Stella's Circle is a home, a job, a community. And our mission is to transform lives by offering Real Homes, Real Help, Real Work. We have an annual report which is available on our website – [www.StellasCircle.ca](http://www.StellasCircle.ca) – and that annual report takes you through a lot of the impact that we had this past fiscal year, which covers the period of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020.

To begin, we're going to hear from three people: Dr. Jasbir Gill, who is Chair of our Board of Directors; Bob Carter, Chair of the Stella's Circle Foundation Board; and Baxter Rose, who is Treasurer of both Boards.



#### **Video 4: Jasbir Gill**

Hello, I'm Dr. Jasbir Gill, and I'm proud to be the volunteer chair of the Stella's Circle Governance Board. I'm here joining you from Naomi Centre – our emergency shelter for young women. Today's AGM is a wonderful opportunity for us all to hear about the remarkable work this organization has done over the past year, especially when we consider the tremendous challenges 2020 brought us, like Snowmageddon and the beginning of COVID-19. Stella's Circle remained unwavering in their delivery of programs and services, and quickly innovated to respond to the needs of our community's vulnerable members. Here at Naomi Centre, staff even snowshoed to work during the State of Emergency to ensure that residents were cared for.

I know I speak for the entire Board of Directors when I say how honoured we are to be involved in an organization as impactful as Stella's Circle. Today we acknowledge the work of our board treasurer, Baxter Rose, and members Claire LeDrew and Vanessa McBay. We say goodbye to them and thank each of them for their years of service to the board and for all their wonderful work. And we're pleased to welcome new members to the board. I am grateful to be surrounded by such dedicated volunteers. Here are the names of the Board of Directors for Stella's Circle for 2020-2021:

#### **Video 5: Jasbir Gill**

We would not be able to do our work without the outstanding support of our funders. Our Government of Newfoundland and Labrador funders: the Departments of Advanced Education, Skills, and Labour; Children, Seniors and Social Development; Justice and Public Safety; and Health and Community Services. In addition, we're grateful to funders Eastern Health; Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation; as well as Correctional Service Canada; and the City of St. John's. As a social justice ministry of the United Church of Canada, we are also appreciative of the support of the United Church and its congregations.

Stella's Circle is fortunate to have an exceptional Foundation Board to raise funds and awareness for our mission of transforming lives. Our donors allow us to focus on offering innovative programs and services to meet the current and anticipated needs of participants along their recovery journeys. At every board meeting, we hear about the commitment and dedication of the Stella's Circle staff, and the resilience of our participants. Thank you so much for all of your work and for your trust in us.

#### **Video 6: Bob Carter**

Hello, I'm Bob Carter, Chair of the Stella's Circle Foundation Board. Today, we're at the Brian Martin Housing Resource Centre, which is a facility that really exhibits and demonstrates the core values that Stella's Circle stands for. During the early months of the pandemic, staff here converted a window into a walk-up called the "Welcome Window." This portal, if you will, kept them connected with participants who needed to avail of the housing services, counselling, and it really showed how the organization was able to pivot during very challenging times.



Our Foundation Board members are committed to Stella's Circle's mission. We're highly motivated to ensure that the organization continues to transform the lives of its participants through innovative programs and services. We've got a great team and I'm proud of the work that they've done, and I would like to thank each and every one of the Foundation Board members for their support during the past year. I'd also like to thank, and we wouldn't operate at all, if it wasn't for the support of a dedicated staff, led by Lisa Browne, in support of the Foundation's work.

I am pleased to report that the Foundation Board was able to raise \$288,000 in our last fiscal year. The support of individuals and companies was paramount in us reaching that goal. I'd like to highlight a couple of the significant corporate partners that we worked with last year.

Last year was the fourth Run for Women program, sponsored by Shoppers Drug Mart. We had a tremendous program with lots of support and lots of teams, and raised \$70,000 for programs at the Naomi Centre and Just Us Women's Centre. Tomorrow, coincidentally, our fifth Run for Women will be taking place, however it will be a virtual event taking place between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of September. We're looking forward to having participation much broader than we would normally, from all parts of the province, for people who would like to run or walk in support of women's mental health. There's still time to sign up and make a difference.

We'd also like to thank Fortis for a very generous contribution of \$50,000 to our Expressive Therapies campaign. I should tell you that we're just over half way in our campaign with our objective of trying to raise 1 million dollars to support those programs. And I'd also like to thank Husky Energy for its \$100,000 contribution, a tremendous gift in support of a new program at Employment Services.

Every gift to Stella's Circle makes a difference, whether it's a donation matched on Giving Tuesday, a corporate donation, a donation given monthly, or a planned gift in the future. On behalf of the Foundation, I extend my thanks and gratitude to all of our donors who support Stella's Circle participants of on their journey of recovery.

In closing I would to extend thanks on behalf of the board to two retiring board members, Dan Penney and Paul Fowler, who are saying goodbye after years of service and support to the board, and thanks to Baxter as well. We're pleased to welcome several news faces to the board in the coming year. The Foundation Board slate for 2020-2021 is:

### **Video 7: Baxter Rose**

Hi, my name is Baxter Rose, I'm the outgoing Treasurer for Stella's Circle Community Services and Stella's Circle Foundation. I've been the treasurer of both organizations for about 6 years and it has been a tremendous honour and privilege to be able to serve on this board. Stella's Circle is doing some fantastic work in our community and we're presenting today from the Hungry Heart Café, which is the flagship of our social enterprise operations. The organization has had a tremendous impact on our community and the participants we serve. Already this year in 2020, the Hungry Heart Café has provided 5700 meals to participants and other community members that were facing food insecurity.



It is unfortunate we can't meet in person for this AGM because I always look forward to the excitement and anticipation on everyone's faces as they await the presentation of the financial report. But I do take comfort in knowing that you're at home, and you can do a little happy dance now that the time has come for us to review our financial statements.

There is a summary of the statements at the back of your Annual Report. And for those who crave additional information and more details and more financial facts, the audited statements are available on our website [www.StellasCircle.ca](http://www.StellasCircle.ca) or you can call the office and we will be quite pleased to provide you with an autographed copy for those who want the additional information.

Basically, both organizations continue to be in good financial condition. Stella's Circle Community Services shows assets and liabilities as of March 31, 2020 at just over \$13 million. It's a very significant operation.

The operating statement of revenue and expenditures for the year ended March 31, 2020 is on page 52 of the Annual Report and shows the breakdown of various program lines, and revenues and expenditures for each program area.

For Stella's Circle Community Services, the year ended with a small surplus of almost \$4000, \$3,939 to be exact, which represents less than 1% of our revenue. So we do quite a good job with budgeting our operations from year to year. This amount, that almost \$4000, has been set aside in a reserve fund that is there to address needs in our operations in our properties in the future.

I will also provide a very high level summary of the audited statements for the Stella's Circle Foundation. As you know, the foundation is responsible for raising money in support of Stella's Circle's programs and services. The Foundation's financial statement is contained on page 53 and shows the assets and liabilities of the organization at a little over \$1 million.

The statement of revenue and expenditure shows that the Foundation raised \$288,348 in 2019-20. And of that, \$266,842 was allocated to Stella's Circle for its various programs and services. The remaining expenditures of the Stella's Circle Foundation are related to operational and fundraising costs, which is approximately 7% of all funds raised.

From discussions with our independent auditor, I can assure you that he tells us that the controls we have implemented for the organization are working, and our organization is well run. Overall, both organizations had a successful year, once again, despite the challenges we had to face with Snowmageddon and the beginning of the pandemic.

And I now, as I conclude, I look forward to hearing from Lisa Browne, our CEO of Stella's Circle, and she shares with us more of the year's highlights. Thank you very much. It was been a pleasure of the past number of years serving the organization and the very important work that the organization does. Thank you.

### **Video 8: Lisa Browne**

Thank you to all our Foundation and Governance Board members who are providing such great leadership to the organization.

I'm here in front of Just Us, which works with women involved in the justice system. And during the pandemic, the staff here kept so in touch with participants, even though they couldn't visit. And they did that by using Therapy Assistant Online, for example, through the generosity of donors who provided things like cell phones and tablets to participants and also going to their homes and dropping off food and checking on them. I am so grateful for the staff for all of their work. Working with women involved in the justice system is really an increased need in our Province.

Right now, you will hear from Nora Duke of Fortis. A wonderful support of Stella's Circle. We're so grateful to them and all of our donors and government supporters. Then you'll hear from Jeremy at Emmanuel House, who will tell us a little bit about his story as a participant. And finally, you'll also hear from a volunteer, Jessica Green, of Prima Information Solutions. Jessica and her colleagues volunteer at our Employment Services with the Adult Basic Education Class.

### **Video 9: Nora Duke**

Good afternoon everyone. My name is Nora Duke and I'm happy to participate in this virtual AGM of Stella's Circle and bring greetings on behalf of Fortis Group. Stella's Circle has done such great work over the years, and we've certainly overserved and participated in it, and we're really happy to bring greetings today in this Bonaventure Community Garden. A program that got started some time back with Stella's Circle, the Expressive Therapies program, really caught our eye. It had the cornerstones of inclusion, respect, and innovation, and they're really values that mean a lot to us at Fortis. So we jumped on board with a \$50,000 donation to the help with the program, and we're so glad to have done it. So congratulations Stella's Circle – keep up the good work and we look forward to seeing what you do in the future.

### **Video 10: Jeremy**

Hi, my name is Jeremy. Today I'm here on the steps of Emmanuel House where my journey first began on my road to recovery. What led me to Emmanuel House was my addictions and it's where I stayed and lived for 6 months. Brian was my night counselor and he was the leader of Sunday group, Recovery Maintenance. Brian was a big part of my transition and stay at Emmanuel House and was a big part of my life. Sunday Group to me is something that I look forward to every week. If I've been having a bad week, it just resets my week and gives me a chance to start over again next week. It lets me just reconnect with people that I've been in contact with in Emmanuel House. I feel Sunday group is very important to people that are currently living in Emmanuel House. It lets them see that that kind of life can continue outside, and there's hope, and that things will be alright. I just feel like it's up to the people who are coming back to help promote that, and let them see how well they're doing. And it lets them

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see that there is going to be troubles along the way, but that you can kind of get through anything. I can't reiterate enough how appreciative I am for the help that I got at Emmanuel House, and it was really a life changing experience for me. I don't even – in just a year's time – I can't even – you know, I came so far that it's not even real sometimes. I can never say enough and how thankful I am, and how lucky I am that I was able to come here. I feel like it gave me my life back, even at my age of 43. It just lets you know that it's never too late.

## **Video 11: Jessica Green**

Hi, my name is Jessica Green and I'm a technical analyst with Prima Information Solutions. I'm here on the steps at Cabot Street with Stella's Circle where I come every Tuesday to volunteer with the Adult Basic Education program, and we help the class with their computer literacy. A lot of these skills are very important for people just at a basic level to help with building resumes, to find work, to continue with keeping work, because technology is a part of every job, and we're finding that more and more now especially with COVID-19 and recent events. Remote work is more common, technology is more vital than ever. It's just amazing to see people flourish and really to enjoy learning these skills. And to be able to help and to be a part of this process is just a wonderful, wonderful thing. I couldn't ask for more. Stella's Circle is just doing an amazing, amazing thing by providing us all with this wonderful opportunity.

## **Video 12: Lisa Browne**

Our Stella's Circle Inclusion Choir usually sings a few songs at our AGM. That's not possible this year, but we're going to hear them sing. Last year Rachel Cousins wrote the song Just Sing for the Choir. We're going to play that song with a slide show of some of the photos that are in our annual report - photos of events that happened this year.

Thanks very much for joining us, for what is our first, and hopefully our last virtual AGM!