



**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
IMMIGRANT WOMEN SERVICES OTTAWA**

Bruyère Centre for Immigrants  
219 Argyle Ave, Room 113-114  
September 24, 2019

**Registration and Reception (5:30-6:00 p.m.)**

Members registered and enjoyed refreshments before the meeting

**1. Call to Order**

- Mechthild Meyer, Chair - IWSO Board of Directors, called the Annual General Meeting (AGM) to order.
- Reminded that only those in good standing can vote tonight.

**2. Approval of AGM Agenda, September 24, 2019**

Motion to approve the Agenda: Mechthild Meyer, seconded: Nadine Fattaleh. Carried.

**3. Approval of the Minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting**

Motion to approve the minutes: Mechthild Meyer, seconded: Lori-Ann McDonald. Carried.

**4. Executive Director Report**

Mercy Lawluvi, Executive Director, highlighted IWSO's achievements and challenges in the past year:

- IWSO provided more client-centered services to almost 3,000 women and over 1,700 children.
- IWSO interpreters completed 3851 interpretation service assignments in 28 different languages.
- Industrial Sewing program acquired 12 new sewing machines and 80% of the women who graduated from the program secured full-time employment in the sewing industry.
- The President of the UN Assembly, Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garces, spoke highly of IWSO programs and services during her visit to IWSO.
- IWSO engaged over 100 volunteers who contributed 4100 volunteer hours.
- To carry out its mission and vision IWSO collaborated with partners such as Ottawa Police, iSisters Technology Mentoring Inc., Western Ottawa Community Services.
- Staff salary and inadequate office space remain to be the biggest challenges facing IWSO.

In closing, Mercy thanked all partners, Board of Directors, staff, volunteers and especially sponsors, donors and funders for their continued support.

**5. Board Chair's Report**

Mechthild Meyer summarized three key issues that the board worked on during the past year:

- Increasing visibility: board members and ED sought many opportunities to increase IWSO's visibility, for example, through first lady's visit to IWSO and Executive Director's keynote speeches at important events.
- Improving governance and policies: The Board developed important policies and updated the Governance Manual to reflect the by-laws that were approved at the last AGM.

- Financial sustainability: The Board conducted a salary review and made plans towards compensating staff more adequately. The Fund Development Committee actively participated in grant writing activities, resulting in a new opportunity through a grant from the Department of Women and Gender Equality to hire a Fund Developer over a four-year term to assist with bridging gaps.
- A new five-year strategic plan is in the process of being developed for the period starting in 2020.

#### **6. Approval of 2018/19 Audited Financial Report**

- Juliet Woodfield, Treasurer, presented the 2018/19 Audited Financial Statements.
- Motion to approve the Statements: Juliet Woodfield, seconded: Mez Majdoub. Carried.

#### **7. Approval of Auditors for 2019/2020**

Juliet Woodfield sought the approval for KPMG as IWSO's Auditor for 2019/2020. Diane Tuyishime moved to approve, seconded: Bota Tuyakova. Carried.

#### **8. Client Testimonial**

Through the lived experience of three clients, members gained renewed respect and appreciation of IWSO's contribution to the elimination of all forms of abuse against women and children and achievement of social and economic equality for immigrant and minority women.

#### **9. Volunteer Appreciation**

Noushin Alyzad (Volunteer Coordinator) invited volunteers to come forward to receive a certificate of appreciation. Volunteers had contributed over 4000 hours in the past year. Their contribution was essential to the delivery of many of IWSO's programs and services, such as the sewing classes, English writing and conversation circle, drop-in computer classes, and French conversation classes.

#### **10. Nominating Committee/Election of Board members**

- Sadaf Kachalia reported on the recruitment process including the diversity and expertise of the nominees. The Nominating Committee was seeking individuals with legal/governance and technology experience.
- New members seeking election introduced themselves: Barbara Amona, Patricia Begin, and Navpreet Uppal
- Seeking re-election: Juliet Woodfield, Bernadeth Betchi, Tasha Truant
- Seeking ratification: Bota Tuyakova
- Sadaf Kachalia moved to approve the new and re-elected board members, seconded: Diane Tuyishime. Carried.

#### **11. Presentation of Board of Directors**

All current Board members were recognized and asked to stand.

#### **12. Closing Remarks**

Sadaf Kachalia thanked everyone for attending the AGM, and particularly the staff and volunteers for setting it up.

#### **13. Adjournment**

Mechthild Meyer moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded: Juliet Woodfield. Carried.