

Transformation - What's In It For You

President's Message

In contemplating my message to you for the spring edition of FOCUS, I note that there is an impossibly long list of very hot issues of interest.



**OASIS President,
George Braithwaite**

The ultimate challenge will follow in the drafting of the Developmental Services Transformation Plan for approval by Government by year-end.

Funding Reform and Assessment

The Ministry's objective of fair, equitable and sustainable funding is a vital element in the transformation of developmental services.

That objective has been a key feature of every pronouncement since discussions on transformation were initiated in the summer of 2004.

To quote the ministry; "entitlement, inclusion and citizenship should form the founding rationale for government funding...". An essential principle at the individual level is that funding for services should be based on a standard application process involving an assessment of an individual's strengths, preferences and needs. Equity in the transformed system means that people with similar needs receive similar funding. The next most important principle is that the funding must be portable throughout Ontario.

(Continued on page 2)

Transformation

The Ministry plans for public consultation and the contents of a consultation paper will be approved by the Cabinet in the near future. The paper will be a substantial document of about 60 pages. Separate discussions for agencies and for families will occur in the Spring at about 30 locations across the province and will take about 2 months to complete. A townhall type of format is contemplated. Details regarding the process will be posted on the Ministry's website in due course.

All and sundry will be asked to provide feedback. It is safe to assume that the Ministry staff will be busy over the summer with the task of assimilating the responses from agencies, provincial organizations, and families.

OASIS Board Meeting Dates & Board Members

OASIS 9th Annual General Meeting and Conference

McLean at "The Bend"

Paynter's Humour Motivates

Difficult Decision - Put that on Pause Please

Running More Effective Meetings

CRA Clarifies Fair Market Determination

Upcoming
OASIS Board
Meetings

May 2, 3
2006
Pre-AGM
Grand Bend

All
Invited
To Attend

2006 OASIS
Conference

Grand Bend

May 3, 4, 5,
2006

President's Message (continued from page 1)

An assessment tool has been developed and is undergoing evaluation. It has been used in the 3 provincial facilities and in a Nova Scotia initiative. Additional development of the tool has occurred in Ontario and further evaluation will be conducted within additional Transfer Payment Accountable Organizations. An expert panel/reference group will be appointed and have responsibility for providing ongoing technical advice on a range of issues related to the assessment tool, including enhancements based on the pilots, resource allocation, and recommended steps that will lead to the new funding model.

Suffice it to say, it will be essential that agencies, individuals and families should participate fully and provide thoughtful feedback during consultations. You will have an excellent opportunity to become informed at the **OASIS annual general meeting and conference** in Grand Bend during the **first week of May**. Both the Minister and the Deputy Minister will attend and provide a 90 minute briefing and questions on transformation.

Competitive Wages and Pay Equity

These are areas of concern for everyone. The issue of a competitive wage for the sector has been addressed in discussions with the Minister and the DM. It is evident that they understand the problem and the urgency to achieve a solution.

This will not be achieved quickly but if collaboration remains the model for achieving our goals, there is ample reason to expect a sustained commitment from the Minister and ministry staff to work with us to reach the common goal. OASIS is also committed to supporting the Provincial Network as the central point of coordination in this effort. However, transformation cannot be realized in the absence of trained and dedicated employees. Similarly, Pay Equity must provide a solution that ensures the sustainability of service providers. Work on these issues will continue in the months ahead.

George Braithwaite, OASIS President

2005/2006 OASIS Board of Directors (and Officers)

PRESIDENT	George Braithwaite	OCAPDD
PAST-PRESIDENT	Paul Wilson	Community Living Brant
VICE-PRESIDENT, Volunteers	Gerald Sutton	Community Living Oakville
VICE-PRESIDENT, Executive Directors	Sherry Kerr	Aldaview Services
TREASURER	John Bedell	Community Living North Halton
SECRETARY	Ann Kenney	Community Living South Muskoka
DIRECTOR AT LARGE	Brian Young	Simcoe Community Services
Director	Doug Anderson	Ottawa Carleton Lifeskills Inc.
Director	Molly Coke	Community Living Toronto
Director	Brian Dunne	Participation House Support Services London & Area
Director	Mike Humes	Brockville & Area Community Living Association
Director	Denis McClelland	Elgin Association for Community Living
Director	Judy Reid	Niagara Training & Employment Agency and Niagara Support Services
Director	Dick Todd	Middlesex Community Living

OASIS 9th Annual General Meeting and Conference

With this ninth AGM and Conference, we will celebrate the Power of Partnership and Collaboration within the OASIS family.

Hosted by St. Francis Advocates, Lambton County Developmental Services, Christian Horizons, Community Living South Huron and Community Living Sarnia - Lambton.

It has been nearly a decade since OASIS was formed and in that time OASIS has evolved into a highly respected and professional provincial umbrella group for 112 member agencies. With this ninth AGM and Conference, we celebrate the **power of partnership and collaboration within the OASIS family.** St. Francis Advocates, Lambton County Developmental Services, Christian Horizons, Community Living South Huron and Community Living Sarnia-Lambton are honoured to be your hosts.

This year we are pleased to showcase the many accomplishments of our member agencies. From Participation House in London we will learn the ins and outs of crisis management. The Mills Community Support Corporation will guide OASIS members through the difficult process of dealing with NIMBY when opening a new home. Elgin Association for Community Living will show us how the FISH philosophy can enhance employee morale and build trust in organizations.

We will also be pleased to present a joint initiative between OASIS and the Ministry of Community and Social Services regarding On-Line Board Governance Training. Other sessions will include an update on Pay Equity and how to maximize team effectiveness.



Our guest speakers include CBC radio personality Stuart McLean and motivational speaker and comedian Gord Paynter (see page 4 of FOCUS for speaker background).

In addition the Ministry of Community and Social Services will present an overview of the long awaited Transformation.

All of this and more will take place at the Oakwood Resort on the beautiful shores of Lake Huron in Grand Bend, Ontario, behind the backdrop of a tropical Hawaiian theme.

And in case there is not enough to do we will also be offering delegates a chance to take a voyageur canoe trip, participate in a scramble golf tournament, spend their money at a silent auction and network with the many exhibitors who support OASIS and the work of its member agencies.

Aloha! Join us in Grand Bend May 3-5!

McLean at “The Bend”

Stuart McLean is a best-selling

author, award-winning journalist, humourist, and host of the CBC Radio program *The Vinyl*



Café, which has an audience of over 700,000 every weekend. He began his award-winning broadcasting career making radio documentaries for CBC Radio's *Sunday Morning*. Later, Stuart spent seven years as a regular columnist and guest host on CBC's *Morningside*.

His best-selling books include *The Morningside World of Stuart McLean*, *Welcome Home: Travels in Small Town Canada*, *Stories from the Vinyl Café*, *Home from the Vinyl Café*, *Vinyl Café Unplugged* and *The Vinyl Café Diaries*. *Both Home from the Vinyl Café and Vinyl Café Unplugged* received the *Stephen Leacock Award for Humour*.

Since 1998 Stuart McLean has taken The Vinyl Café on the road, performing in large and small towns from St. John's, Newfoundland to Whitehorse in the Yukon.

Stuart McLean is sure to delight all OASIS members and his keynote address will be one to be remembered! What a terrific way to kick off the ninth annual conference and AGM.

Stuart is also a tenured professor at Ryerson University in Toronto and former director of the broadcast division of the School of Journalism. In 1993 Trent University named him the first Rooke Fellow for Teaching, Writing and Research.

More than 700,000 people listen to *The Vinyl Café* every weekend. The popular *Vinyl Café* books and CDs are available at book and record stores across Canada.

Paynter's Humour Motivational

Gord Paynter is a stand-up comic and he is different.

Losing his eyesight in his early twenties as a result of diabetes, Gord thought his lifelong dream of becoming a comedian was gone forever. In truth, blindness opened his eyes to a whole new world of opportunity, humour and motivation.

It all began on amateur night at Yuk Yuk's Comedy Club. Gord's unique style of comedy surprised the audience and triggered fits of laughter. Laughter that sparked the rediscovery of his dream. Today, Gord tours throughout North America performing as both a stand-up comic and a motivational speaker.

When not touring, Gord splits his time equally between his wife Catherine and the golf course. (Maybe not equally...)



Gord Paynter, 2006 OASIS Conference

In 1999 he made international headlines when he struck a 184 yard hole-in-one at North-Ridge golf course in his hometown of Brantford, Ontario.

When there are tough decisions to be made consider pauses, a straw vote to understand the division and choose not to take offense with positions of others.

STRIVE! is a private company devoted to helping maximize the effectiveness of people and organizations with proven governance and leadership principles for continuous improvement. For more information, visit www.strive.com or call their office at 888-752-3330.

Difficult Decision - Put that on Pause Please

by Mary Lynn McPherson
Senior Consultant, STRIVE!

It was a tense meeting. The board was considering options for resolving a projected budget shortfall. The two options were to: accept a budget shortfall on the assumption this was a temporary situation; or, require the Executive Director to balance the budget, which would, most likely, mean key staff members would be asked to accept fewer hours of work and thus, lower pay.

A motion to support one of the options was duly moved and seconded. During the ensuing board discussion there were appeals for prudent fiscal management with a balanced budget. Others argued that preservation of priority programming was necessary to avoid breaking the spirit of the organization during a one to two year funding squeeze.

Several board members were struggling with this dilemma since they counted themselves as friends of the staff. Most board members had served along side staff in delivering one program or another.

After all viewpoints were heard, the chair wisely called for a short recess. She acknowledged the difficult decision and that for her to consider the best option she'd need some time to test her own motive to ensure she was assessing what was best for the organization. Several board members left the room to find a quiet spot to collect their thoughts. Others had quiet conversations with each other.

In the end, the motion passed with a strong majority and no further discussion..

What Can You Do?

Human nature being what it is, we sometimes, consciously or sub-consciously, express our own biases before considering what is best for the whole.

When there are tough decisions to be made consider:

- Pauses that allow for quiet reflection and a sober second thought are always a good idea.
- A 'straw vote' or informal show of hands to see the extent of division within the board is often a helpful step. If it is close to 50:50 then chances are the members or owners will be similarly split. More information or more time will be needed to get a clear majority.
- Choose not to take offense when others on the board express a viewpoint that is counter to yours. It is not about taking sides. Our job is to get to the best decision and sometimes conflicting statements can be constructive in exploring the nuances of a situation in order to arrive at the desired destination.



Mary Lynn McPherson,
Senior Consultant,
STRIVE!

Running More Effective Meetings

By Ron Robinson, President, Abaris Consulting Inc.

Many of us have been "dragged" into meetings that weren't necessary for us to attend.

Look at the objectives for the meeting and determine who "needs" to be there.

Who will need to be there depends on whether the meeting is to inform, gather input or make decisions.

Think about this before inviting everyone in your e-mail address book!

Many people spend a considerable portion of their day in meetings. This article is written to provide you with a few ideas to help you run your meetings more effectively.

The Benefits of Meetings

Meetings can have several key benefits that include:

- Allowing individuals to share ideas and information.
- Enabling individuals to share their preferences.
- Providing opportunity for individuals to provide input to a decision.
- When decisions are made it allows identification of those individuals who may be able/willing to "champion" the decision.
- Gives members of specific groups the opportunity to reaffirm that they are part of a larger whole.

The Problem With Meetings

While meetings have a variety of potential benefits (not all of which are listed above) there are many common complaints regarding meetings. These include:

- Too long.
- Not well organized.
- Too frequent.
- Never actually accomplish anything.
- Dominated by a few people.
- Doesn't deal with the important issues.
- Do not end on time.
- Get off topic.

Preparing For A Meeting

Proper planning can avert many of the problems associated with a poor meeting. To prepare for a meeting you should:

- **Define the purpose of the meeting.** Know what you want to accomplish from this meeting (i.e. your goal). Is the meeting necessary?
- **Develop objectives for the meeting.** The meeting objectives more specifically and clearly define what it is you are trying to achieve during this meeting.
- **Develop an agenda.** The agenda should estimate the time for each item. Allow time for an introduction, agenda review at the start and a summary at the end.
- **Determine who needs to attend the meeting.** Look at the objectives for the meeting and determine who "needs" to be there.
- **Distribute the agenda before the meeting.** In conjunction with the agenda all background materials that will be required for the meeting should also be distributed.

(continued on page 7)

Running More Effective Meetings

(continued from page 6)

There is nothing more frustrating to people to go to a meeting, have a discussion and then nothing happens.

People are busy and have given up time from something else to attend the meeting so be respectful of their time.

This article was adapted from an article by ABARIS Consulting Inc. and originally published by CharityVillage.com.

Conducting The Meeting

Being prepared is half the battle. However, conducting the meeting can be equally challenging. Some rules to keep in mind when conducting a meeting include:

- Ensure that you have **adequate facilities and start on time.**
- **Review the essential logistics,** which include the ground rules, roles of participants, how decisions will be made and agenda.
- **Stick to the agenda.** There are often ideas that come up that are important and need to be addressed. However, if they are not included in the agenda put them in a "parking lot" for a future meeting.
- **Develop action steps** which clearly set out the task, timeframe for completion, the individual who is responsible for completing the task and how the accomplishment of that task will be reported.
- Prior to concluding the meeting **review the decisions made** and action steps to be taken.
- **Follow-up.** Individual who called and distributed the agenda is responsible for documenting the meeting and forwarding the notes (including the action steps).
- **Finish on time.**

Dealing With Difficult People

While many people who attend meetings work well in groups, there always seems to be one individual that is difficult to deal with or has a reputation of hijacking the process or making participation difficult for others. Some typical behaviours of difficult people include:

- Carrying on side conversations.
- Taking criticisms of their ideas as personal attacks.
- Monopolizing the discussion.
- Finalizing the decision before the group has defined the problem.

When dealing with these types of behaviour there are a few simple rules to keep in mind:

Use active listening techniques with this individual but don't agree or engage in debate.

Don't single the individual out. Talk privately to them and explain what their behaviour is doing to the group and ask what you can do to help meet their needs.

Reframe comments. If a negative comment is made, reframe it so that it provides a positive contribution.

Summary

Meetings can be an effective way to help your organization move forward. Following these basic guidelines may assist you in making your meetings more successful.

Check Us Out

OASIS website
www.oasionline.ca
OASIS email
oasis@oasionline.ca

OASIS mission:

To facilitate the sharing of ideas, resources, systems and information, OASIS will liaise with government on behalf of member organizations with the goal of improving the development of cost effective quality supports for individuals with developmental disabilities.

FOCUS is published quarterly by Ontario Agencies Supporting Individuals with Special Needs

Ideas and articles are welcomed for FOCUS. Contact the Editorial Committee.

Look for the next issue of FOCUS in June 2006.

CRA “Gifts and Income Tax” Guide Updated to Clarify Fair Market Value Determination

By Amanda Stacey, Miller Thomson LLP

CRA has released an update to its “Gifts and Income Tax” Guide in which the Agency clarifies how fair market value of a gift is to be determined.

The updated Guide states that “fair market value” is usually the highest dollar value one can obtain for a particular piece of property in an open and unrestricted market. The fair market value of donated property is required in order to determine the “eligible amount” of a gift. The “eligible amount” is the amount by which fair market value of the gifted property exceeds the amount of any advantage, if any, received or receivable for the gift.

Determining the fair market value of gifts in kind (i.e. gifts of property other than cash) is not a simple process, and donors and qualified donees must consider a variety of factors when determining the fair market value. The updated Guide suggests that donors and qualified donees obtain one or more appraisals to establish the fair market value of the property being donated. The appraised fair market value is used to calculate the eligible amount of the gift. The appraised fair market value will also be used in the calculation of any capital gain or loss to the donor from donating the property.

Where the property to be donated is personal property, real property or intangible property, the CRA encourages donors and qualified donees to contact a professional appraiser, valuator or other individual accredited in valuation.



Amanda Stacey
Miller Thomson LLP

The chosen appraiser must also be independent. The Guide notes that if a recipient has difficulty finding an independent appraiser, or if this would involve unreasonable expense, a qualified employee of the qualified donee accepting the gift can appraise it if the fair market value is \$1,000 or less. If the circumstances are unusual, that employee can appraise the donation if the fair market value is just over \$1,000.

The question of how to value gifts-in-kind is often a vexing one. While the CRA provides some guidance, as discussed above, valuation approach questions often require the application of judgment.

This article was first published by Miller Thomson, LLP’s Charities & Not-for-Profit Newsletter.