

# QUEEN'S HOUSE *Retreat & Renewal Center*

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2021 – Agenda D1 June 7, 2022

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**Note:** Due to the lingering challenges of Covid, this meeting will be held virtually via Zoom for Board Members and guests:

**When:** Tuesday, June 7, 2022 beginning at 4:00 pm

**Meeting ID:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84450057675?pwd=VjZCL1h2Q1FFUVphQUtSR3phNHpaZz0984450057675> Passcode: QH

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On behalf of our Oblate Fathers, Brothers and Bishops, our Oblate Associates, our staff and our community, we recognize that we carry out this mission and ministry on Treaty 6 Territory and the Traditional Homelands of the Metis.

## Meeting Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we gather for this meeting, we thank You for the special and sacred task that You have entrusted to us - to be food for the world and to be the face and hands of God to our community. Grant us the wisdom to perform this task as You desire. Give us the strength to be models of Your love to each other, to our visitors and those who come to Queen's House, whatever their purpose. Help us to provide the care and direction that will serve Queen's House at the same time that it serves You. Above all, grant us the humility to acknowledge that it is from You that all our gifts do come.

We ask this in the name of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns forever and ever. We ask this in the name of Mary, Our Heavenly Mother and our patron, St. Eugene - Amen.



# QUEEN'S HOUSE

Retreat & Renewal Center

## ADVISORY BOARD – MINUTES

D1

May 3, 2022

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*Our values are rooted in the Oblate Charism, we are a sacred, welcoming space. Our Vision is to be a sacred place where minds are nourished and spirits are nurtured. Our mission as a retreat and renewal centre; we offer sacred space for self reflection, encounter with others, and spiritual exploration. Nourish your mind. Nurture your spirit.*

### In Person:

**Board:** NA

**Admin:** NA

### Virtual:

**Board:** Diane Cote, Lynn Gow, Donna Hagen, Ivan Hitchings, Adele Longstaff, Deb Rolfes, Kathy Jo Simmie

**Admin:** Sarah Donnelly, Martha Fergusson, Corrine Pambrun, Brendan Bitz

**Regrets:** Sr. Anne Lewans, Fr. Bill Stang, Michel Thibault, Wyndham Thiessen, Bishop Gerry Wiesner

1. Opening Prayer & Welcome:

2. Agenda: Review and Approve:

**Motion:** That the Agenda be approved as presented.  
Ivan Hitchings / Donna Hagen

**CARRIED**

3. Minutes: Regular Board Meeting: February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**Motion:** That the Minutes be approved as presented.  
Donna Hagen / Diane Cote

**CARRIED**

4. Board & Executive Membership:

- Board & Executive Membership Considerations for next year.
  - ✓ Deb has reluctantly accepted the retirement of Diane Cote and Michel Thibault.
  - ✓ An initial list of prospective candidates is being generated.
  - ✓ A nomination committee of Deb Rolfes, Ivan Hitchings and Brendan Bitz will review and recommend appropriate action.

5. Oblate Leadership Connections Report:

- Local Oblate Connections.
- Ottawa Leadership Update.
- Support for the Indigenous Delegation to Rome Planning.

6. Advisory Board Standing Committee Reports:

- Finance Committee: Corrine Pambrun and Michel Thibault
  - No additional report.

7. Queen's House Administrative Reports:

- Accounting & Finances:
  - Audit 2021 Update: Corrine Pambrun
  - Budget Report: 2022 – Q1: Corrine Pambrun
    - Comparisons and Payroll Status.
    - THRP Submissions and Status.
- Programming Report: Sarah Donnelly
  - Progress and Planning Updates.
  - Growing in Wisdom Success.
- Development Office Report: Martha Fergusson
  - Spring Fling Update.
  - Golf Planning: Sunday, June 26<sup>th</sup>
- Director Report: Brendan Bitz
  - Indigenous Delegation Prayer
  - Staffing Changes: (Farewell for Lynden set for Saturday, August 27<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 pm)
  - Covid Challenges
  - AGM Planning: Tuesday, June 7<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 pm - Virtual

**Motion:** That Administrative and Planning Reports be received as presented.  
Kathy Jo Simmie / Donna Hagen

**CARRIED**

8. Old Business

- Nil

9. New Business:

- Nil

10. Closing Prayer and Adjournment:

**Motion:** To Adjourn. (6:15 pm)  
Ivan Hitchings

**CARRIED**

Next Board Meeting: Annual General Meeting: Tuesday, June 7<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 pm - Virtual

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Deb Rolfes - Chair

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Brendan Bitz – Director

June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
Date

#### **4. Remarks – Board Chair – Deb Rolfes**

These will be offered as a verbal presentation.

## 5. Administrative Reports:

Our reporting outlines the successes and acknowledge the challenges of 2021 and allows us to express our appreciation for the kindness and generosity of our many faithful and practical supporters. We do wish to say a simple thank you to our local Oblate Community, our generous and talented Oblate Associates, our faithful and trusted Advisory Board, our community and partners, our volunteers, and our staff for the dedication and commitment of each to support and promote the mission and ministry of Queen's House as best we could over the year. You are treasured and an important gift to this mission and ministry and your commitment, resolve and example of living community are vital to this work.

We offer the following details and insights into planning, problem solving and the practical work of Queen's House during 2021.

### **Sponsored Programming, Spiritual Direction and Partnering:**

Programming at Queen's House happens in so many different and unique ways. Over the past few years, the retreats and workshops that we have offered to the wider community have grown:

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>RETREATS/WORKSHOPS</b>	<b>IN-PERSON</b>	<b>ON ZOOM</b>	<b># PARTICIPANTS</b>
2018	20	20	0	n/a
2019	34	34 (6 were cancelled)	0	685
2020	44	30 (15 were postponed)	14 (1 was postponed)	769
2021	44	14 (3 were postponed)	34 (6 were postponed)	948

As the pandemic continued, so did the growth of our on-line programming. While there was initial resistance and even dismay in connecting with other seekers on Zoom, as the months have unfolded, we saw many people recognizing the gift that this platform had to offer us - connecting us from across the globe at times. For a complete list of the programs sponsored by Queen's House in 2021 please contact our Programming Director, Sarah Donnelly.

In addition to the one-time events or retreat/workshop series, we sponsored regular gatherings such as our weekly Centering Prayer Group (in-person and on zoom), hosted by Fr. Paul Fchet, Ana Gheysen and Dave Henderson; and the monthly Women in Ministry gatherings (on Zoom in 2021) hosted by Martha Fergusson and Rev. Donna Wilson. A more accurate tabulation of the programs offered in the table above would be to add 50 weeks/gatherings for Centering Prayer, with 20-30 people attending each gathering, and 9 more gatherings for Women in Ministry, with about 10 attendees per gathering.

In 2021, working in partnership with other retreat centres across Canada and the Oblate School of Theology, San Antonio TX, Queen's House provided leadership in launching the "Growing in Wisdom: Seeking Deeper Generativity" two-year program for those 60+ who are interested in exploring the Spirituality of Aging. This ground-breaking program welcomed 69 participants - most from Canada, and a few from the US - who are committing to monthly small group gatherings, book studies, and four 5-day intensives. The program began in September 2021 and ends in June 2023. The program coordinator is Nancy Phillips from Winnipeg MB, assisted by Sarah Donnelly. Both Nancy and Sarah are graduates of the "Forest Dwelling: Spirituality for our Wisdom Years" program - founded by Fr. Ron Rolheiser OMI - at the Oblate School of Theology, San Antonio TX. Our Growing in Wisdom program is unfolding beautifully - we are very pleased with this initial offering.

Advertising our programs included a wide variety of venues: church bulletins throughout the province and in all denominations; our website; Facebook page; and our weekly e-newsletter. These electronic newsletters, in addition to promoting upcoming programs, advertised fundraising events such as our "Spring Fling" and "Annual Gala" and invited people to learn more about the spiritual direction/companionship that is offered by Queen's House, and the Olive Branch Ministry, whose offices are found at Queen's House.

Sincere thanks to Dave Henderson, Martha Fergusson, Brendan Bitz and Ana Gheysen for the tech and zoom support that they shared in 2021, in assisting in our online programming. And many thanks to the staff and volunteers of Queen's House for their support as Queen's House continued to offer retreats and workshops - in-person and on Zoom - during 2021.

### **Spiritual Direction and The Spiritual Direction Formation Program:**

The important work of Spiritual Direction at and through Queen's House is the result of 30+ years of ministry in this area spearheaded by Sr. Adeline Behm and our affiliated Spiritual Directors. Important work made even more crucial by the restrictions imposed by Covid, as most of our Spiritual Direction Team were able to see people online. A sincere thanks to the 18-member team of spiritual directors who continue to accompany people with wisdom, care, and compassion.

The Spiritual Direction Formation Programming finished its two-year program in 2020 and was not offered in 2021.

### **Partnering in Ministry:**

Queen's House continues to look for opportunities to engage in meaningful partnerships with retreat centres, theological schools, universities/colleges, churches, and other organizations. Whether people gather on our 'holy ground' or meet virtually, we are committed to offering opportunities for prayer, reflection, dialogue, and transformative learning.

### **Hybrid Models, Partnerships, and Innovations:**

Many programs that happen in our facility and on our grounds are organized and facilitated by outside groups. These individuals and organizations value our facility, grounds, and the reflective atmosphere of the retreat centre. The staff of Queen's House, when possible, also supports these programs by providing registration services for participants, and technological support such as Zoom hosting and the recording of their events. Our thanks to the Bookings Coordinator, Pauline Henry, our live-in volunteers Sr. Ludvina Scheck and Dave Henderson, and volunteers from the local community who assist in welcoming many people to our facility.

### **Sarah Donnelly – Programming Director**

### **Development Office and Events & Engagement Work 2021:**

The important work that Martha Fergusson has been focused on includes the following:

- **Gala 2021** we were able to smooth & enhance all the online pieces to host this virtual event again. Attendees were responsive and we managed to increase revenue from 2020, which has been helpful. A warm cider beverage welcome and careful consideration of Covid Care created warmth and welcome for our guests.
- **Roots and Wings Campaign** supports our facility capital and program needs. This program attracts the donor who recognizes the need for capital projects to be regularly funded in order to maintain our facility. A sturdy facility enhances our ability to deliver excellent programs, host our community well and offer mission and ministry to all.
- **G.E.M:** “Giving Every Month” is a donor program that we invite our community to join in order to provide Queen's house with a solid donation platform. We benefit greatly from regular monthly donations. Six individuals joined GEM in 2021 and we are looking forward to sharing information so as to further expand this initiative.
- **Our Spring Raffle and Snowball Raffle** continue to be enjoyable and profitable cornerstones in our annual fundraising goal. The realities of Covid have restricted the opportunities for in person visits and attendance at the Retreat Centre and in their own parishes, both of which have impacted communication and invitation. Thankfully, so many of our loyal Queen's House participants have continued to support these raffles.
- **Year End Planning:**  
The plan is to hold our Annual Golf Scramble and planning for this is well underway. We will be moving our Raffle Events on-line and will use the Trellis Platform to help us manage these fundraisers. So far, this forward planning has been both helpful and successful in our efforts to assist the ease and accuracy of our donor engagement.

### **Martha Fergusson - Events & Engagement Coordinator**

## Financial Report:

The 2021 Audit under the direction of OMI Lacombe and audit firm Marcil Lavallee for all entities of the Oblate Saskatchewan District Community (SDC) has been completed. We are pleased to share that our auditors, Marcil Lavallee noted no challenges or discrepancies regarding these financial statements or the records that comprise them. This is no small feat, especially considering the challenges imposed by Covid! It is a significant achievement and a testament to the diligence in this area and the leadership of Corrine Pambrun, especially because payment and receipting components have by necessity shifted to virtual and this has been accomplished in the absence of normal staff support. We are well into 2022 and continue to be impacted by COVID-19 in all aspects of our work, planning and prospects. The final audited summary is as follows:

### Queen's House Retreat & Renewal Centre 2021 Audited Financial Overview

April 25, 2022

<u>Revenue</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>
Bank Interest	\$574	\$593	\$221
Government of Canada (CEWS+CEBA)	\$0	\$110,226	\$121,293
Facility Use	\$569,055	\$120,180	\$96,444
Donations from OMI Lacombe Canada	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$81,294
Room and Board	\$41,821	\$42,657	\$43,506
Programming	\$218,137	\$80,493	\$111,095
Bookstore & Canteen	\$7,122	\$1,004	\$399
Donations	\$86,032	\$74,987	\$83,666
Reimbursements from OMI Lacombe	\$0	\$39,722	\$0
Fund Raising - Development Office	\$134,282	\$88,289	\$123,307
Investment Income (fair market value)	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$3,526</u>
	<b>\$1,107,023</b>	<b>\$608,151</b>	<b>\$664,751</b>

<u>Expenses</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>
Salaries and Wages	\$592,043	\$325,066	\$278,909
Operating Expenses (Schedule A)	\$410,610	\$212,717	\$265,587
Programming	\$94,603	\$44,662	\$46,274
Fund Raising	\$29,277	\$20,223	\$18,884
Roof Repairs	\$0	\$0	\$0
Amortization of Capital Assets	\$14,572	\$6,432	\$6,038
Amortization of Intangible Assets	\$1,085	\$1,085	\$1,085
	<b>\$1,142,190</b>	<b>\$610,185</b>	<b>\$616,777</b>
<b>Balance - Year End</b>	<b>(\$35,167)</b>	<b>(\$2,034)</b>	<b>\$47,974</b>

Prepared by Corrine Pambrun

## **Retreat Centre Planning, Advisory Board Work and Oblate Leadership:**

Our work navigating safe and productive ways forward for all aspects of this mission and ministry continues to be supported by our Ottawa based Oblate Leadership Team comprised of Fr. Ken Thorson – Provincial, Fr. Richard Beaudette - Vicar and Br. Harley Mapes – Treasurer, our Advisory Board, our Local Oblate Community and our Queen’s House Staff working together through consultation and analysis to confirm sustainability. Recent features of this shared work include the following.

Oblate Leadership continues to provide important practical support for facility and grounds work in particular and as “a supportive cushion” in our efforts to manage expenses. The unrelenting but moderating impact of Covid is a lived reality for all and is therefore a consideration in every decision. Our search to find and confirm pathways to viability beyond the present continues to be very much a substantial aspect in the work of the days ahead.

Direct Oblate financial support has allowed us to complete repairs to the chapel roofs, wrapping up that project in early November 2021. We continue with the basic reclamation work of the Mazenod site even as we recognize this area remains a work in progress.

The need and associated effort to continue with the diverse technical innovations, upgrades, improvements and applications over the last couple of years and specifically, the last 24 months continue to be essential, compelling and all encompassing. This type of application remains a heavy lift even as it has allowed us to serve our community differently and under the circumstances, more appropriately. The learning curves and required adaptations have lessened even as the workload has intensified.

Through all of this quiet intensity, our Board, executive and chair Debbie Rolfes have maintained a solid, steadfast support that has been appreciated far more than they know.

## **Hosted Booking Activities:**

The hosted component of the center, received and organized through our Bookings Office and communicated to staff in all departments, has been singularly impacted by Covid-19. Restrictions relating to group size, requirements for social distance and the need to mask and sanitize remained in place all year and have served all very well. We do see increased activity, and some days we have been challenged to keep up to all of the demands that we have faced. We remain collectively hopeful and trusting. This has been good for our souls! As always, balancing return to service and the associated financial implications of increased service will continue to require attention and consideration. This move to “normal” has been most encouraging and the many expressions of appreciation and delight being expressed by guests is gratifying. Hope truly does spring eternal!

## **Practical and Purposeful:**

The following Queen's House initiatives were undertaken over the last year. These efforts meet facility needs and assist with the routine challenges at hand. Thankfully, we have required minimal emergency responses. Such work included but was not limited to:

- Continued reclamation of the former Mazenod site.
- Final elevator re-certification.
- Roof repairs for the chapels were completed underbudget and with excellent results.
- Managing the increased cleaning and facility care needs that increased traffic required. Thank you to Juvy Gregorio and Romalynn DelaRose for your excellent service and a fond farewell to Marlou Zarko who moved to Lethbridge with her husband Alvin.
- The decision to close our Book Store was made as 2021 ended. Under current the current and extenuating circumstances of the pandemic and the recent death of our long time Book Store Guardian Sr. Lucy Palm, the time was right. This space has been converted to housing all of our IT and Virtual equipment. Perhaps a sign of the times!
- Further refinement of IT utilization, especially in terms of the hands-on requirements of this work. This is an area of ongoing effort and attention to the extent that we will never "arrive" but will constantly renew and upgrade the 3 key areas of application: hardware (equipment and infrastructure), software (programming applications) and warm ware (people related skills and competencies)
- Managing and providing for the increased security needs of Queen's House remains a work in progress. Break ins and theft on 2 occasions, in conjunction with a sewer backup, creates a sense of unease and a recognition that effective security remains a priority and goal in all our work.

## **Saying Thank You!**

- We have expressed this many times and with great appreciation! We are grateful to our Oblate Community at every level for the leadership, encouragement and support that you provide. We especially acknowledge our Saskatchewan District Community (SDC) for the practical support for all our work even as Covid continues to displace much of our work. We do especially acknowledge and thank Fr. Bill Stang, Fr. Paul Fachel, Fr. Mike Dechant, Fr. Ken Forster, Brother Walter Demong, Bishop Gerry Wiesner, Fr. Ron Rolheiser and all Oblates and Associates for the layers of SDC support that assist us.
- To our steadfast Advisory Board for your direction, support, faith, trust and commitment. Thanks especially to our Executive who have been so present to us over that last year as a sounding board, encouragers, and providers of goodness and wisdom. Thank you! Specific thanks to Diane Cote and Michel Thibault, both of whom are stepping back from the Board after 15 and 16 years respectively, for your guidance, support, wisdom and steadfast leadership. You will be missed.
- To our Community of Support for your consistency, generosity and engagement.

- To our staff for your unfailing commitment to action, response and passion despite having to contend still and even more with the 2 imposters of too busy and too quiet.
  - ✓ We especially want to note the work and flexibility of our kitchen staff, Twyla Richmond, Aldwin Abigania, Mary Ann Alonso, Gea Desalisa, Angie Sander and Byron Miller. Thank you for your patience and steadfast service!
  - ✓ Thanks to Sr. Adeline for maintaining the work of Spiritual Direction despite every challenge imaginable. Your spirit shines through in such a wonderful way.
  - ✓ Thanks to Pauline Henry in Bookings and Reception, to Martha Fergusson in Development, Events and Engagement and Sarah Donnelly in Programming for your steady, creative and undaunted approach to the challenges of your work.
  - ✓ Thank you, Corrine Pambrun, for managing every unimaginable variation in your work, plastered with the novel, the unexpected, the unpredictable and the unusual!
  - ✓ Thank you, Sr. Ludvina Scheck and Dave Henderson, for looking after the many details of Live-in with hospitable care and practical solutions.
  - ✓ Thank you to our current key volunteers, Ana Gheysen, Alice Zimmer (decor), Sharon Cybulski (plants) and our live-in volunteers as they signal their returns.
  - ✓ And finally, thank you Lynden Zimmer, for 40 years of dedicated service to the Oblates and Queen's House as you signal your retirement over the coming months and as you mentor Thomas Friesen to the position. More about you later, Lynden!!

**Meeting Our Ongoing Challenges:**

Our Board and Administration and Staff remain most grateful for the quality partnership with our Local Oblate Community, and by extension, with our Ottawa based Leadership Team as we collectively engage in making retreat ministry work. This teamwork is essential as we navigate the realities of the times; Covid, divided communities, families and friendships, inflation, social turmoil, unrest, and the list goes on. It is challenging to serve as a place of calm and to be glue for a fracturing world. Uncertainty remains even as the work continues and the needs within our community surface and manifest themselves in unprecedented ways. We look forward with gospel inspired hope to embrace this future with skill, insight, compassion and commitment to live out our mission and ministry.

**6. Remarks From Oblate Leadership:**

Please welcome Fr. Ken Thorson – OMI Lacombe Provincial – Ottawa

**7. New Business:**

**8. Questions:**

**9. Adjournment:** Moved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_