

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

April 11, 2023
6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Attendance Summary

Of 55 Total Members

- 26 Attended
- 3 Represented by Proxy

Non-Members in attendance

- 9 RisingOaks' Parents
- 146 RisingOaks' Employees
- 2 Guests

Total Attendees/Proxies: 186

Per the RisingOaks Early Learning by-laws, a quorum of 20 members is required to transact business. The official attendance report is filed with these minutes.

1. Welcome

- Lori Prospero, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), welcomed members and guests to the Annual General Meeting for the period ending December 31, 2022.
- A land acknowledgement was offered acknowledging that RisingOaks Early Learning programs and services are located within the traditional territories of the Neutral, Anishinaabe, and Haudenosaunee peoples.
- Reviewed the meeting's agenda and the meeting tools for the webinar format.

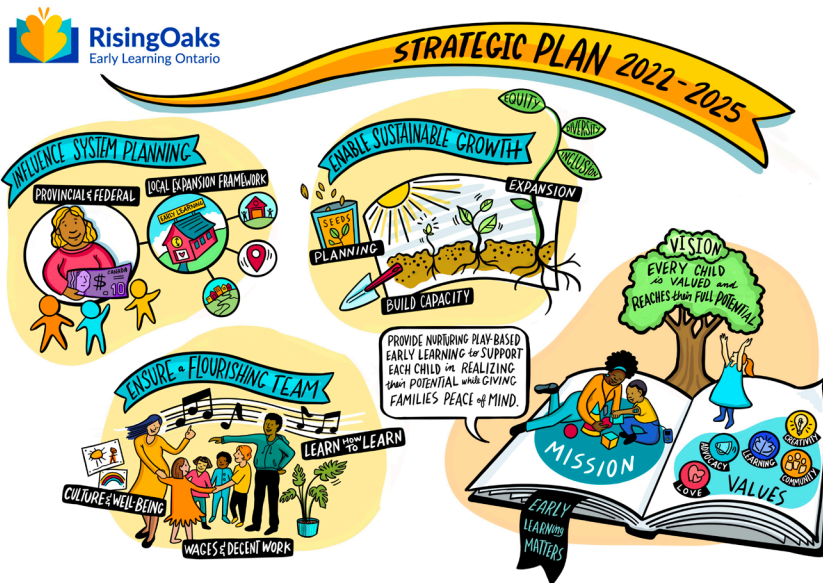
2. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

- There being a quorum of members present for the transaction of business, and members having been giving adequate and proper notice of the meeting, the meeting was called to order at 6:40 pm. Amanda Stevens served as Chair of the proceedings.
- Jessica Ronzio, board secretary, with support from executive assistant Kathy Dunk, was confirmed to record of the minutes.
- Approval of the Agenda
 - **Motion:** *It was moved, seconded and carried that the agenda for this annual general meeting of RisingOaks Early Learning Ontario be approved as presented.*

3. Joint Report on Governance and Operations

- The board chair and CEO provided a joint report on governance and operational achievements in 2022.
- The 2022-25 Strategic Plan was reviewed, and progress was shared. Some key highlights include:
 - Influence system planning by highlighting the advocacy profile and how this work positively impacts the organization and its members.

- As we work to enable sustainable growth, RisingOaks Early Learning | Oak Creek, with 88 licensed full-day spaces and 142 before/after school spaces opened in September 2022.
- The organization continues its work to ensure a flourishing team through a workplace wellness, leadership and capacity building, training and an organizational assessment on diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism (DEIA), as well as continuing to progress towards professional pay & decent work for employees.



6. Long-service Awards Recognition

- Kristine Parsons, Director of Operations, presented long-service awards to 8 deserving employees:
 - **5 years:**
 - Catherine M. | Oak Creek
 - Jenny S. | John Sweeney
 - Melissa M. | Lincoln Rd.
 - Michelle C. | St. Brigid
 - Shae-Lynn C. | Oak Creek
 - **10 years:**
 - Cara K. | Saint John Paul II
 - Courtney T. | St. Matthew
 - Keri N. | St. Matthew
 - Nancy S. | St. Luke
 - Sarah C. | Lincoln Rd.
 - **20 years:**
 - Cristina F. | Saint John Paul II
 - Kathleen M. | Oak Creek
 - Shannon B. | Saint John Paul II
 - **25 years:**
 - Ann F. | Administration
 - **30 years:**
 - Lisa E. | Saint John Paul II

4. Treasurer's Report

- Jen Tieu, Treasurer, provided an overview of the financial statements from 2022.
- The treasurer reviewed the *statement of operations* – revenue and expenses, highlighting key points from the [audited financial statements](#) and [2022 Annual Report](#).

- The Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) program began its rollout of parent fee reductions, off-set by revenue replacement funding for operators, in mid-2022.
- RisingOaks closed out December 2022 with a surplus of \$227,806, compared to the \$717,471 budgeted deficit.
- The *statement of changes in net assets* was reviewed, representing the Member's Equity in the corporation. This resulted in several transfers between internally restricted funds. Current net assets are at \$4.2 million, representing just over 3 months of operations.
- Questions were solicited from attendees; none arose.

5.1. Approval of the 2021 Audited Financial Statements

- **Motion:** It was moved, seconded, and carried that the Members of RisingOaks Early Learning Ontario approve the audited financial statements for the year ending on December 31, 2022, as presented.

5.2. Appointment of the Auditors

- The treasurer noted that based on standard operating procedure, it was appropriate to put audit services out to tender to test the market as both requirements and costs have risen significantly in recent years.
- Questions were solicited from attendees. A member inquired about the timeline for the RFP to be completed?
 - summer 2023
- **Resolution:** it was moved, seconded, and carried that:
 - **Whereas** BDO LLP (Waterloo Office) has been the auditors for RisingOaks Early Learning for 7 years, and **Whereas** audit fees have risen substantially due to sector and audit legislation changes, and
 - **Whereas** the organization intends to issue a Request for Proposals for audit services of the year ending December 31, 2023, therefore
 - **Be it resolved** that the members of RisingOaks Early Learning Ontario provisionally appoint BDO Canada LLP (Waterloo office) as its auditors for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2023. Furthermore, the members delegate authority to the board of directors to carry out the RFP and if another audit firm is selected to proceed with terminating the agreement with BDO and appointing a new auditor on behalf the membership.

6. Ratification of By-Law Revisions

- Alisha Michiels, chair of the governance committee, reviewed the proposed revisions of the by-laws re: non-gendered language, section 3.2 Conditions of Membership, section 9.1 Officers and section 9.2 Description of Officers and Officers.
- Questions were solicited from attendees; none arose.
- **Motion:** it was moved, seconded, and carried that the Members of RisingOaks Early Learning Ontario confirm the General Operating By-Law No. 4, as presented and approved by the board of directors on March 7, 2023, and in doing so the members repeal the General Operating By-Law No. 3.

7. Report of the Nominating Committee

- Karen McIlroy, chair of the nominating committee, presented the committee's report. The recruitment and selection process for directors, as outlined in the by-laws, was reviewed.
- The nominees were introduced as their biographies were read.
- **Motion:** [it was moved, seconded and carried that the members of RisingOaks Early Learning Ontario elect the Board Recommended Slate of Nominees, as presented, to serve as directors for a 2-year term.](#)
- Congratulations was offered to newly elected, and re-elected directors: Jennifer Tieu, Jessica Ronzio, Katherine Walsh, Robert MacDonald and Stephen Brown.
- The full board of directors for the 2023-24 term was introduced: Alisha Michiels, Amanda Stevens, Blessing Akpan, Jen Tieu, Jessica Ronzio, Julia Bloom, Karen McIlroy, Katherine Walsh, Paul Okoye, Robert MacDonald, and Steve Brown.

8. Board appreciation

- The board chair and vice-chair recognized two directors who are completing their term: Erin Mikha and Julia Klann. Each were presented with a small token of appreciation prior to the meeting.
- Amanda Stevens was inducted into the prestigious *Chairs' Circle of Excellence*. This award was introduced in 2013 to recognize a director's sustained commitment and outstanding contribution to RisingOaks Early Learning for a minimum of four-years. Recipients have provided effective leadership and demonstrated growth in governance, mentoring future leaders. Alisha, on behalf of the board, thanked Amanda for her exemplary leadership.

9. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism

- Cayla Charles, senior consultant with Credence & Co. was introduced and presented their report on the diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism organizational assessment of RisingOaks Early Learning.
- She highlighted the strengths, areas of growth, hopes and recommendations for the organization. View the slides from her [report](#).
- Questions were solicited from attendees and answered live by Cayla, along with the chair and CEO.
 - Clarification on the language used in the report re: a few, some, many or most.
 - Questions were open-ended during the listening process, so those terms are used to represent approximately how many raised that particular point.
 - If DEIA pertains to all the "isms", how do determine which ones will be focused on the most? Which isms stood out to you so far in the organization that seem to need more growth?
 - anti-racism, including religion and culture, and transphobia/ homophobia because they are so prevalent in our community
 - ableism
 - mental health
 - When training and group discussion happen for staff and leadership, will there be an opportunity to give more feedback based on what we are learning? For example, a more detailed survey that has fewer broad questions.

- Credence recommends facilitated conversations as part of the follow up, along with a second survey conducted later in the year.
- Effect of Catholic community and teachings and their effect on the DEIA action plan since many RisingOaks' centres are co-located in Catholic schools.
 - The action plan is not yet developed. Through engagement, we need to reflect on how Catholicism may come through into our programs given that we are co-located. Then we need to look at how RisingOaks' communicates its DEIA policies more clearly and ensure everyone is informed about our values.
- The panel reflected on what DEIA mean to you personally, thinking about what that looks like, feels like or sounds like?
- The video "[Hearing Hands](#)" was played.

10. Closing Remarks

- Amanda thanked the members, staff, and RisingOaks Early Learning families for attending and for being engaged in the work of the organization.
- There being no further business, the Annual General Meeting concluded at 8:34pm.

These minutes were approved by the board of directors on May 9, 2023 and now form part of the Public Record for RisingOaks Early Learning Ontario.

Original copy signed by Board Secretary
Lori Prospero