

2021

ANNUAL REPORT

EDMONTON SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL





On behalf of the Edmonton Police Service, I would like to offer my commendation to the work of the Edmonton Social Planning Council on this year's edition of the Social Well-being Indicators.

This product is a fact-based resource, without attribution, that will be helpful for the Edmonton Police Service in our work to make data-led decisions within our mission of increasing community safety and well-being in our city. Kudos to yourself and your team

Enyinnah Okere
Chief Operations Officer
Community Safety and Well-Being Bureau

Thank you for all of the work that the Edmonton Social Planning Council does every day to highlight child poverty and other important issues in our community.

We need a commitment to reduce child poverty in Alberta. While proposals like affordable early learning and child care are crucial, my colleagues and I know that we need to examine a basket of other measures to complement that. The work of the Edmonton Social Planning has always made a valuable contribution to these debates in the past and it is clear from your editorial on child benefits that you will do so again in the years ahead.

On behalf of the NDP Official Opposition, thank you for all you do to make our city, and indeed our province, a better place.

Rakhi Pancholi
MLA for Edmonton-Whitemud



2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

04	Who We Are	20	Blog Posts
05	ESPC Strategic Framework	21	Media Highlights
06	President's Report	22	Lunch & Learns
07	Executive Director's Report	23	Citations
10	Meet our Staff	23	Volunteers
12	Summer & Practicum Students	24	Capacity Building Efforts
12	Our Board of Directors	25	Members
13	Board Reports	25	Donations
17	Monthly Highlights	25	Endowment Fund
18	Committees and Collaborations	26	Partners & Supporters
19	Publications	27	2021 AGM Minutes

WHO WE ARE



The Edmonton Social Planning Council (ESPC) is an independent, non-profit, non-partisan social research organization with registered charitable status. Our focus is social research, particularly in the areas of low-income and poverty. ESPC is a source of knowledge and expertise on social issues within our community.

We are dedicated to encouraging the adoption of equitable social policy, supporting the work of other organizations striving to improve the lives of Edmontonians, and educating the public regarding the social issues that impact them daily.

Our Vision

A community in which all people are full and valued participants.

Our Mission

Through rigorous research, detailed analysis, and community engagement, we deepen community understanding of social planning issues, influence policy, and spark collaborative actions that lead to positive social change

ESPC STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES



SOCIAL EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

We are dedicated to helping our community become more inclusive and equitable.



STRATEGIC COLLABORATION

We collaborate with diverse partners to achieve shared goals without duplicating the work of others.



INDEPENDENT VOICE

We are an independent and non-partisan organization that does not speak for or represent the views of other organizations, governments, or political parties.



SOCIAL AWARENESS

We value accessible information that helps a wide range of audiences understand community challenges and opportunities



ACTIONABLE RESEARCH

We do relevant and timely research that helps others identify and implement solutions to social planning issues



COMMUNITY CAPACITY

We build knowledge and skills in our community by openly sharing our learning, experience, and expertise with others.

THE OUTCOMES WE SEEK TO ACHIEVE

INFORMED COMMUNITY

A community that is knowledgeable about social planning issues, challenges, and potential actions to improve the lives of all.

ENGAGED COMMUNITY

A community that works together to determine priorities and to organize efforts to achieve common goals.

CHANGED COMMUNITY

A community that advocates for and benefits from positive social change.

STRATEGIES WE USE TO ACHIEVE OUR OUTCOMES

Conduct, aggregate, and disseminate research to help our community understand current issues, government policies, and systems, and identify potential courses of action.

Achieve shared goals and make best use of resources by leading and participating in collaborative partnerships focused on producing positive, sustainable change.

Work with decision-makers and influencers by sharing our comprehensive, evidence based research in a timely manner so they are able to make informed decisions.

Share our expertise to help individuals, organizations, governments, and community groups better achieve their goals.

Act as the community's goto organization for relevant and quality research on social planning issues.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

On behalf of the board of directors, I'm pleased to present the Edmonton Social Planning Council's 2021 Annual Report. As always, the organization benefits from a small but mighty team that produce high quality, well researched publications that inform debates and policy on various social issues in Amiskwaciy Waskahikan, or Edmonton. In 2021, the Council continued its role to build capacity within Edmonton's social services ecosystem by assisting partners with social research. The Council released core publications related to Edmonton's living wage, the state of child poverty and in-depth assessments of social issues in the Vital Signs series and continued to provide timely research on other known or emerging issues. The Council also launched the online Social Well-being Tracker where 75 indicators are monitored and analyzed to provide a robust assessment of well-being in our community. Plus, all of this was completed amidst year two of a global pandemic that has required agility to adjust to the ups and downs of events that have impacted everyone's personal and professional lives. I encourage you to flip through this annual report to learn more about the accomplishments of the Council. And to the staff: thank you for working at the Council and your contributions in 2021.



On the board side, we have had a very, very busy year and I want to thank all board members for their service in 2021. We were truly ambitious in what we set out to achieve but have accomplished some fundamental work, such as bringing bylaws to this Annual General Meeting for approval by members and continuing work on board policy. I want to ensure members that the Council is governed by an amazing group of volunteers that care deeply about the vision and mission of the organization.

Though we are reflecting and celebrating the Council's accomplishments in 2021, I did want to highlight important work the board has begun. We recognized as a board that we, the Council, has a big role to fulfill our vision in terms of creating a community in which all people are full and valued participants through research and policy advocacy. With that, we will be conducting an equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) audit in 2022. The findings of the EDI audit is a first step and recommendations will inform future work of the board, staff and members as we assess our programs, policies and governance.

On a personal note, it has been an absolute pleasure to have served on the Council's board over the last six years. It has truly been a fulfilling opportunity to work alongside so many dedicated board and committee volunteers over the years.

Best wishes,

-Peter Schalk, Board President



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

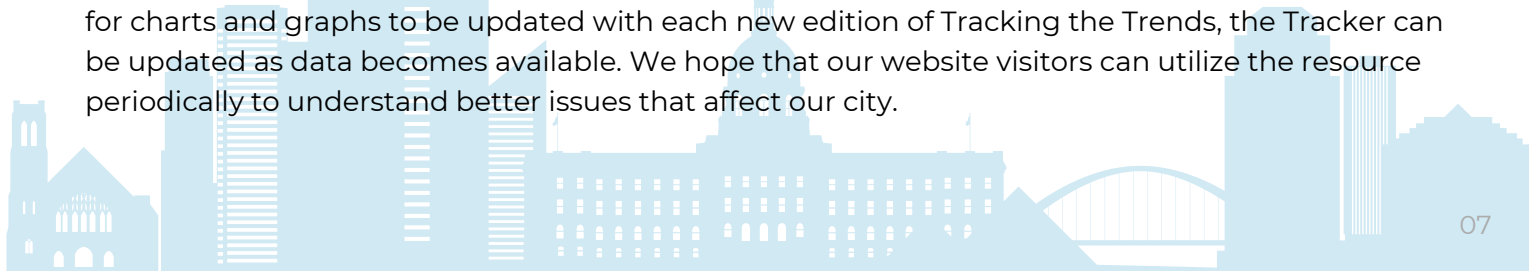
After the COVID-19 pandemic began early in 2020 and ended with the approval of safe and effective vaccines against the virus, many hoped that 2021 would bring us a return to normal.

While vaccines certainly were a harbinger of hope and saved many lives, a true return to normal was sidelined by the emergence of multiple variants of the original virus that were a lot more transmissible than before. With COVID-19 continuing to pose challenges in our daily lives, the existing inequities that were exacerbated and exposed by the virus—income inequality, a rising cost of living, racial injustice, gender inequity, food insecurity, housing instability, to name just a few—are also very much clear and prescient challenges we must face in order to enable an inclusive and just recovery. Here is hoping that 2022 will provide a roadmap to a form of normal that equally benefits everyone. The Edmonton Social Planning Council (ESPC) remains committed and well-positioned to providing rigorous research and social policy analysis that helps to draw out this roadmap. Our work in 2021 enriched the public discourse and contributed positively towards imagining a better future for our city.



Sparkling positive change and pursuing policies that uplifts all segments of our community needs to be based on the best available evidence and data to guide elected officials and policymakers in their decision-making. We released a feature report early in 2021, *Confronting Racism with Data: Why Canada Needs Disaggregated Race-Based Data*, which took a look at the call for collecting race-based data many advocates from racialized communities have been asking governments, school boards, and other institutions to address. The report looked at what race-based data entails, how it can guide the implementation of anti-racist policies, and recommendations on how it can be responsibly introduced. Our Spring 2021 issue of *The fACTivist*, our quarterly newsletter, built upon this theme with a wider look at race and equity. Social agencies and school boards were invited to reflect upon what they can do going forward to address racism within our community meaningfully.

Related to the data front, ESPC took a great leap forward by adapting our longstanding publication *Tracking the Trends* (the 15th edition was released in 2020) and transforming it into a web-based resource, *Social Well-Being Tracker*. The data—which tracks the community health of Edmonton—from the legacy publication is divided into 75 social well-being indicators covering a wide range of topics, including health, education, employment, and poverty. Instead of waiting every other year for charts and graphs to be updated with each new edition of *Tracking the Trends*, the Tracker can be updated as data becomes available. We hope that our website visitors can utilize the resource periodically to understand better issues that affect our city.



The cost of living was a pressing social issue for households in Edmonton and beyond in 2021. Challenges with supply chains exacerbated by COVID-19 and skyrocketing inflation has made the cost of food and other essentials more expensive. While this is a challenge for many people, those living in low-income and poverty disproportionately feel the pinch. Matters are made worse when salaries are below a livable wage, and income support or other government benefit programs are not indexed for inflation.

ESPC was well-positioned to tackle these issues. The release of Bridging the Affordability Gap: Report and Recommendations, produced in partnership with the Centre to End All Sexual Exploitation, summarizes the results of a short-term bridge funding program involving five women with histories of sexual exploitation who were facing financial difficulties making ends meet. The program provided funding to cover basic living costs, financial coaching, and other supports. The report concluded with a number of recommendations to overhaul provincial income support programs to make life more affordable for some of the most marginalized groups.

Knowing how much you need to make to provide a decent living is crucial with the pressures of inflation. In 2021, we updated our Living Wage Report, which we have been tracking since 2015. The living wage for a family of four is now \$18.10 per hour, \$1.59 higher since our last calculation in 2019. Building off this work, we also calculated and reported what a living wage is for a single adult, which is \$21.26 per hour. This gap can largely be attributed to limited government support for single people compared to support available to families. The release of these reports coincided with the launch of the Alberta Living Wage Network, a collaborative body made up of various Albertan municipalities. We help communities calculate their annual living wage numbers and provide qualifying living wage employers certification. We are proud that close to 50 organizations have already been certified as living wage employers.

We also had the opportunity to continue delving into the issues of food security and affordable housing in 2021. We provided data analysis and support to Edmonton's Food Bank for their third Beyond Food client survey (previous surveys were conducted in 2015 and 2018), which sought to understand better who uses the Food Bank's services and offer recommendations on how governments can better assist those who live with food insecurity. On the affordable housing side, we collaborated with Vibrant Communities Calgary for a joint analysis of the provincial government's strategies to address housing affordability titled What you need to know about Stronger Foundations: The Government of Alberta's affordable housing strategy. While there are some positive developments in their new strategy, there are a number of areas of concern and caution that call into question on whether these initiatives will meaningfully reach those who are most in need.

Since our Lunch and Learn events shifted to a virtual format in light of the pandemic, we have been pleased to see continued growth and engagement in attendance throughout 2021 as we continue to offer them virtually. We were pleased to offer 14 events throughout the year, inviting expert speakers from various social agencies and government bodies to share their knowledge with an engaged audience. The issues covered were diverse, including homelessness, affordable housing, seniors, child care, caregiving, and others. We anticipate continuing with the virtual format for the time being. We will make decisions on any potential shifts back to an in-person or a hybrid format based on the desires of our attendees.

On our personnel front, we, like so many organizations, were not spared from the major employment changes during COVID-19. We had a number of staff departures, shuffles, and new faces who joined our team throughout 2021.

In February 2021, our research coordinator Sandra Ngo left her position after nearly three years in service to take a position with the Government of Alberta. We were grateful for her passion for social issues and strong research acumen. Rowan El-Bialy, assumed the position in April however left the organization near the end of August. We thank Rowan for the contribution she made during her time. Sydney Sheloff, our Research Officer, was elevated to Research Coordinator in October 2021 and has admirably stepped up in her new role and brings a fresh new perspective. Due to significant funding setbacks related to COVID-19, we had to let go of our Community Engagement Coordinator Brett Lambert in September 2021. However, we were fortunate to have him return as Research Officer in November 2021 when the position went vacant and we look forward to his contributions in a new role. Justine Basilan, our Executive Assistant since 2018, left her role in November to relocate to Vancouver. We were able to quickly fill Justine's role by hiring Chloe Heiland-Booth that same month. Chloe joins us from the Winnifred Stewart Association, and we are pleased with how quickly she has adapted to the organization.

With the staff changes and our adjustment to a new normal of working within a hybrid model of both office and home, we are now well-positioned to take on new challenges for 2022 and look forward to continuing our research and advocacy in the areas of low-income and poverty.

Once again, I had the opportunity to work with a knowledgeable and skilled group of individuals in their role as Board of Directors. You will see from the other reports that this past year they took on some major foundational work related to our bylaws and policies, all of which will help to strengthen ESPC. As we continue to journey through the equity, diversity, and inclusion work both by our board and staff, I am excited to realize how we can further expand and welcome diversity into our organization and work. I extend my sincere thanks to these folks for the many meetings they held, the guidance they provided to me, and for their forward thinking to help ESPC meet the challenges and expand our opportunities to work in the social services sector.

Finally, I extend my sincere thanks to the ESPC members, funders and volunteers who continue to believe in what we do and see how our work makes a difference in our community. Despite the significant impact of the pandemic, these folks have continued to support our work to make Edmonton a just and inclusive community.

Susan Morrissey,
Executive Director



MEET OUR STAFF



SUSAN MORRISSEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Susan Morrissey has been with ESPC for over 16 years. As Executive Director, Susan works collaboratively with others in Edmonton's non-profit sector toward moving the needle on the bigger social issues facing the community. Recently she was instrumental in establishing the Alberta Living Wage Network, along with colleagues from other parts of Alberta.



CHLOE HEILAND-BOOTH, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Chloe Heiland-Booth graduated from the University of Alberta with a bachelor's degree in Environmental Science. After graduation Chloe worked and volunteered with non-profit organizations gaining a passion and dedication to work in the social sector.



JENN ROSSITER, RESEARCH SERVICES AND CAPACITY BUILDING COORDINATOR

Jenn Rossiter completed her master's degree from York University, Toronto, in international Development Studies, during which time she studied child protection policies and informal child care practices. Recognizing the importance of community development, she has since aimed to translate her international experiences into local practice. Jenn spent several years working at the University of Alberta, most recently with the Faculty of Native Studies, learning more about Alberta and Treaty 6. Respectfully connecting this knowledge with her social sciences background has been rewarding and a practice that grounds her ongoing work.



BRETT LAMBERT, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR

Brett Lambert has worked in several communications roles at the University of Alberta and non-profit organizations such as Native Counselling Services of Alberta and Public Interest Alberta. Brett has a diploma in Journalism from Grant MacEwan, and a bachelor of arts and master's degree in Library and Information Studies from the University of Alberta. Brett lives on the south side of Edmonton with his wife, Diana, and two young sons.



SYDNEY SHELOFF, STRATEGIC RESEARCH COORDINATOR

Sydney Sheloff recently graduated from the University of Alberta with a master of arts degree in Sociology. Her research focused on youth inequality and homelessness. Her master's thesis explored what it meant for homeless youth to pursue a successful future in a social, economic, and political landscape that marginalized them and limited their opportunities. In addition, she studied the criminal justice system and the criminalization of impoverished and racialized people. She also studied the unique experiences of Indigenous people in Canada. Sydney is dedicated to investigating social issues through the eyes of those most harshly affected by them. In this position, Sydney is excited to turn her research into action and advocate for social change. In her free time, Sydney enjoys embroidery, baking and trying new recipes, and exploring all the local shops, restaurants, artists, and sites Edmonton has to offer.

PREVIOUS STAFF MEMBERS

2021 was filled with a great ESPC team. We had new people join and had to say goodbye to others. We'd like to thank everyone who contributed to our 2021 staff, for their hard work and engagement with our community.

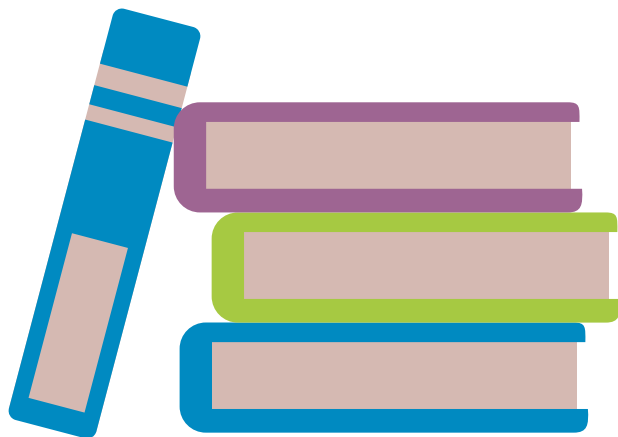
JUSTINE BASILAN, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

ROWAN EL-BIALY, RESEARCH COORDINATOR

SANDRA NGO, RESEARCH COORDINATOR



SUMMER & PRACTICUM STUDENTS



Aastha Tripathi

Practicum Student, Concordia University

Amy Jo

Summer Student

OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Peter Schalk

Board President

Katherine Weaver

Policy & Governance Committee Chairperson

Vanessa Zembal

Finance & Audit Committee Chairperson

William Howe

Membership & Engagement Committee Chairperson

Charlotte Bennie

Board Director

Denise Kirk

Board Director

Paula Kirman

Board Director

Ashley Baxter

Board Director (March)

Thomas Grenier

Board Director (March)

Rhea Kachroo

Board Director (December)

Danielle Dolgoy

Board Director (September)

Keith Goertzen

Board Director (September)



ESPC is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors

The volunteer Board of Directors is responsible for the governance of the Edmonton Social Planning Council. The Board is comprised of individuals who are passionate about equitable social policy and making a difference in their community.

All board members are required to be:

- Committed to supporting the ESPC and its mission to address and research social issues, inform public discussion, and influence social policy
- Current members of the Edmonton Social Planning Council in good standing

BOARD REPORTS



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Peter Schalk (Chairperson), Bill Howe, Denise Kirk, Katherine Weaver, Vanessa Zembal

In 2021, the board formally re-established an Executive Committee for the first time in many years. As such, we spent considerable effort on working with the board to determine how this committee could effectively be utilized. As a “committee of committees” it provided a unique opportunity to coordinate the work of the board considering membership comprised all committee chairs and a director-at-large. A key deliverable of the committee was creating a new board conflict and dispute resolution policy to ensure the Council has clear guidelines and processes in order to handle conflicts and disputes that may involve staff, volunteers or the board. Though we are reporting on 2021 activities, this committee was asked by the board in 2022 to begin the process of selecting a vendor for an equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) audit. The EDI audit will be a key area of work for this committee and the board in 2022.





FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE

Vanessa Zembal (Chairperson), Chari Bennie,
Peter Schalk & Thomas Grenier

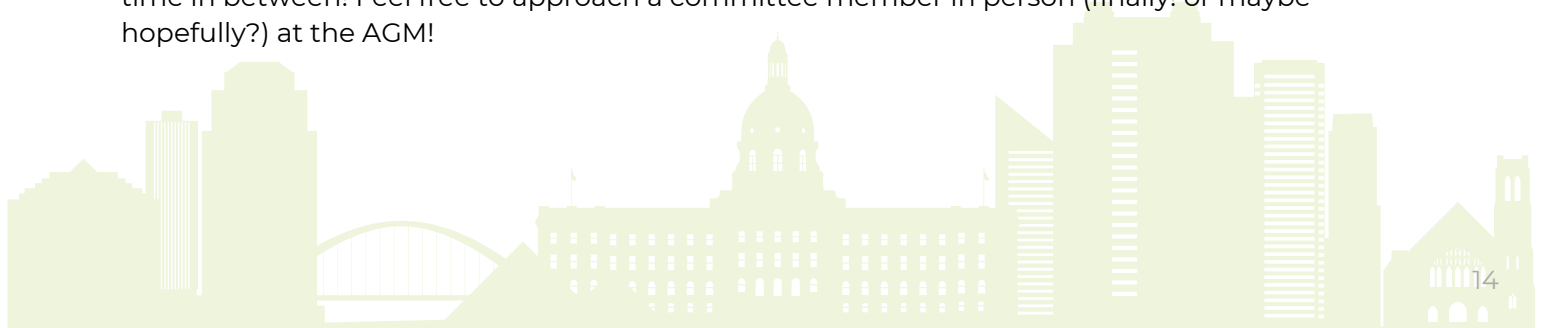
In early 2021, the ESPC received some unfortunate news regarding a significant funding cut. While there had been decisions to delay revenue sources in anticipation of funding cuts and free up funding for later when it could be more dire, this was much more than anticipated or budgeted for at the time. Decisions were made and revised budgets were approved. Thankfully smart financial decisions made in previous years contributed to a significant reserve account that could be withdrawn upon if necessary. However, no such action was required and the ESPC weathered the funding shortage and even ended 2021 with a surplus. This surplus was the result of seeking out and successfully attaining alternative funding sources, including some COVID-19 related relief funding from the various levels of government, and some difficult decisions to reduce expenses throughout the year. The 2021 surplus was allocated to reserve accounts to ensure there are funds available should additional funding cuts occur in the upcoming years.

The 2022 budget was approved in late 2021, but recently amended due to a new grant being approved. Based on this additional funding and new projections for the current year, there was the possibility to approve a budget that included a wage increase of 2%. As a Board we recently approved this budget with the wage increase and feel this compensation was important to illustrate our confidence in the staff and recognise their efforts to the Council.

The ESPC is scheduled to have a casino this July and we are currently signing up volunteers for various roles. Like many other Alberta based organizations, casino revenues are an important funding source the Edmonton Social Planning Council and there are the unexpected benefits such as meeting other people involved in the organization! Please contact Susan for more details or to add your name to the list of volunteers.

Although our committee was small, we did manage to approve multiple policies, including to direct the future contributions for investments and reserves and the allocation of future surpluses, and are continuing to prepare additional documents to help guide decision making and hopefully ease the burden on current and future ESPC staff and Board members. As is the case with other years, we hope our contributions to the organization can allow the ESPC staff and volunteers to focus their skills and energy elsewhere within the ESPC and contributing their valuable assets to the greater community. The committee chair would like to thank Chari and Peter for contributing their time and keeping the momentum up throughout the year.

Our 2022 audited financial report will be presented at the AGM by Carla Walker of Peterson Walter LLP and is available to members upon request. Feel free to contact the ESPC office at info@edmontonsocialplanning.ca if you have any questions or for further information. And finally, if you are interested in contributing to help guide the financial decisions and ensure the financial health of the organization in the future, please consider joining our committee. We can accommodate external members and your advice at our monthly committee meetings or at any time in between! Feel free to approach a committee member in person (finally! or maybe hopefully?) at the AGM!





POLICY & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Katherine Weaver (Chairperson), Denise Kirk,
Ashley Baxter & Thomas Grenier

The Policy & Governance Committee's 2020-2021 Annual Report noted that 2020 was a year that required thoughtfulness, reflective practice, and deep listening. This past year, 2021, was no different, as the Covid pandemic continued to challenge us individually and organizationally. However, the members of the P&G Committee took up that challenge and continued to help the Council renew its governance foundation.

Revision of the Council's Bylaws:

The Council's Bylaws were last amended in 2015. The Board began a review of the Bylaws in the 2019-2020 year but, as with many things, the onset of Covid stalled this work. Over the summer of 2020, building on the work done in the previous year by the Committee and the Board, the P&G Committee developed a process to move this project forward. The Board approved a tight timeline that would have allowed the revised Bylaws to be approved by Council Members, and registered with the Province, in time for their being in place before the 2022 May Annual General Meeting.

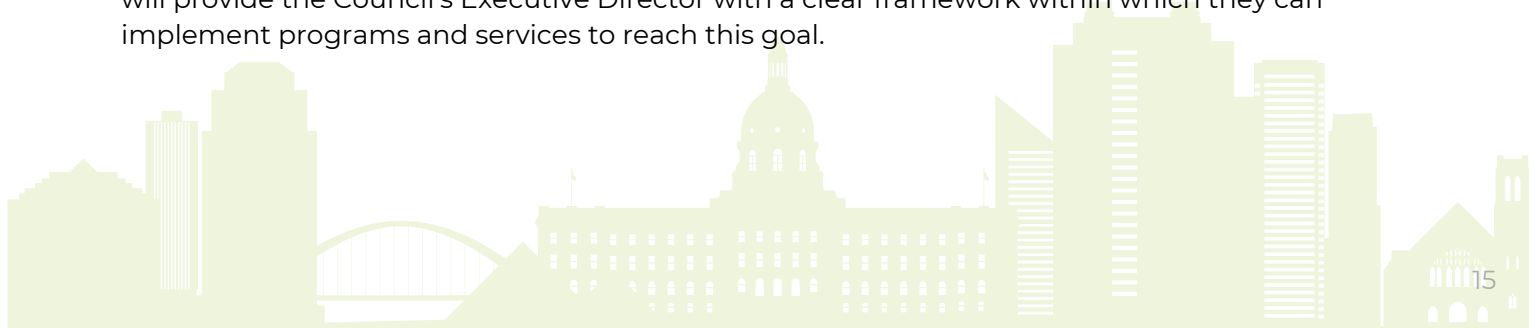
Two special Board meetings were held, on October 26 and December 2, 2021, to give the Board the opportunity to approve or amend the revisions in principle and to provide feedback to the Committee. At a third special Board meeting on January 25, 2022, the Committee presented the Board with a compilation of the revised Bylaws. The Board adopted the 2022 revised Bylaws and called a February 22, 2022, special general meeting to seek the Members' approval of them.

Unfortunately, the Council did not obtain quorum and the meeting was not held. As a result, approval of the 2022 Bylaws will be an item on the 2021-2022 Annual General Meeting.

Policy Development – Committee Support: The P&G Committee provided this support:

- *Policy Review Role and Process:* The Committee developed and piloted a background document for Committees drafting Board policies. It included the criteria used by the P&G Committee when reviewing draft policies and a template for committees when the P&G Committee is providing or asked to provide feedback on draft policies.
- *Review of other Committee's draft policies:* The Committee provided feedback to the Finance Committee on their draft Investment and Reserve; and Surplus Allocation Policies. Through the P&G Chair, alternative drafts of a Conflict Complaint and Resolution were also provided to the Executive Committee to assist it in its development of such a policy.
- *Policy Priority List:* The Committee presented a formalized list the Board in the Fall. We submitted a revised list which was approved by the Board in early 2022.

Policy Development – P&G Committee Policies: A Program and Service Policy can help Council continue to focus its resources and expertise to achieve its mission, vision, and values. Ideally, it will provide the Council's Executive Director with a clear framework within which they can implement programs and services to reach this goal.



Due to its other work and Council priorities, and while some preliminary research was done, the Committee was unable to complete a draft Program and Services Policy. This will be undertaken in the 2022-2023 year. The Committee's proposed process is an interactive one, which will provide the Board, Executive Director, and Staff with opportunities to meaningfully contribute to the development of the policy.

Other priority policies which fall within the P&G Committee's responsibility and will be undertaken in 2022-2023 include: a Committees Policy, for which the Committee developed a draft as a reference during the Bylaws revision project; and a Board of Directors Policy.

The Committee Members: I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the incredible commitment and hard work of the members of the Committee: Ashley Baxter, Thomas Grenier, Denise Kirk, and Peter Schalk. Peter, while also Chair of the Board, kindly continued on the Committee to help us complete the revised Bylaws. During the Fall of 2021, and into early 2022, the Committee met almost weekly so it could meet the project timelines. (And it was weekly when one added in the monthly Board meeting and the special Board meetings convened to present and discuss suggested Bylaw revisions!) Plus, as with any Committee project, members undertook a great deal of work between meetings. As Chair, I so appreciated their enthusiasm, good humour and focus on getting the job done and done well. Thank you all.

Report submitted on behalf of the Committee by the Committee Chair, Katherine Weaver



MEMBERSHIP & ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

William Howe (Chairperson), Paula Kirman &
Denise Kirk

Meeting earlier in the year, the Membership and Engagement committee identified several key focus areas. These, however, were put on hold as the board, lead by the Governance and Policy committee moved us through a very productive review and revision of current bylaws. As part of this review, definitions of membership have been simplified into three categories: Individual, Organizational, and Associate.

We were happy to see suggestions regarding the benefits of various categories of membership concurring with the Net Impact ESPC Graduate Student report prepared for our organization. Notably, one of the key recommendations of the report is to review how incentives for membership can be more directly aligned with the corresponding membership fee. In the coming year, either as part of the organization's strategic planning cycle or as a committee project, we hope to proceed with a membership survey as previously planned. This, as stated in last year's report, will help with a more thorough review of engagement, renewal, and retention, with the added purpose of informing discussions and decisions around membership needs, benefits, and values as well as ensuring ESPC continues to strive for maximizing our impact within the community.



MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS

01

JANUARY

Edify Magazine interviewed ESPC about the responses to food security challenges in Edmonton during the COVID-19 pandemic.



07

JULY

The Social Well-Being Tracker release and launch event



02

FEBRUARY

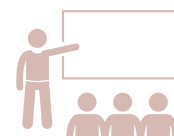
ESPC's *Confronting Racism with Data: Why Canada Needs Disaggregated Race-Based Data* report was released



08

AUGUST

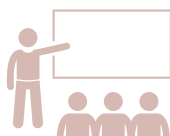
Presentation of the State of Immigration annual report by ESPC to city council.



03

MARCH

ESPC report presentation to race-based data community group in Edmonton



09

SEPTEMBER

Building off previous work, an op-ed was published in the Edmonton Journal on child care being a municipal election issue



04

APRIL

ESPC does a media release on the new provincial rental assistance programs bringing much-needed relief to Edmonton renters



10

OCTOBER

The Vital Signs release and launch event. This year's theme was Making Ends Meet in Edmonton



05

MAY

An Op-Ed was published in the Edmonton Journal about the need for more robust child benefits on a provincial level



11

NOVEMBER

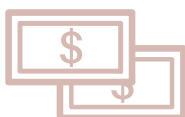
The 2021 Edmonton Living Wage Report was released, showing a living wage for a family in Edmonton is \$18.10 and \$21.26 for a single adult



06

JUNE

Bridging the Affordability Gap Report in partnership with CEASE, was released



12

DECEMBER

What you need to know about Stronger Foundations strategy report in partnership with VCC, was released



COMMITTEES & COLLABORATIONS



PUBLICATIONS

25

Research Reports

80 Years of Community building - The History of the Edmonton Social Planning Council

Confronting Racism with Data: Why Canada Needs Disaggregated Race-Based Data

Research Updates

- March — Spring Edition
- June — Summer Edition
- September — Fall Edition
- December — Winter Edition

Bridging the Affordability Gap

Living Wage 2021 Report

Living Wage 2021 Single Adult Report

What you need to know about Stronger Foundations: The Government of Alberta's Affordable Housing Strategy

fACT Sheets

2021 Alberta Provincial Budget

Zoning Bylaws and Affordable Housing

Supporting Seniors During COVID-19

An Overview of ABC Head Start

COVID-19 and the Islamic Community

C5 Collaborating for Change

The Family Centre: Education & Interpreter Services

What Are the Benefits of Early Learning and Care?

Who is Responsible for Early Learning and Care?

Get Out & Vote! Election Information for Edmonton Voters

ESPC is a source of knowledge and expertise on social issues within our community

Vital Signs

Vital Topic — COVID-19 in Edmonton

Vital Topic — Primer on Income and the Cost of Living in Edmonton

Vital Topic — Gaps in the Social Safety Net

Vital Topic — Small Business & Employment in Edmonton

Vital Signs 2021 – Making Ends Meet in Edmonton



BLOG POSTS



20

To keep our community informed on current research in the areas of low-income and poverty, we set up a blog section on the ESPC website where our staff and volunteers can monitor recent trends and developments: In 2021, 20 blog posts were written by ESPC staff and volunteers.

- Loneliness and Substance Use During COVID-19
- Is the COVID-19 Pandemic Exacerbating Gendered Divisions of Labour?
- Responding to Edmonton Seniors' Needs During a Pandemic
- Asian Canadians' safety amidst the pandemic
- Low Income Single Adults: How stereotypes can make us forget people
- Poverty in Canada: A Progress Report
- Current Status Unknown: Albertan Supervised Consumption Sites in 2021
- Harm Reduction, People Who Use Drugs, and Their Communities
- The Impact of COVID-19 on Persons with Disabilities
- Anti-Asian Hate: One Year After the Pandemic
- Child Care in Alberta Today
- Health Care Costs in Alberta: A Brief Overview
- Child Care and Municipalities
- It's time for an upgrade: Improving emergency shelter standards in Edmonton
- Health Care Investments: Efforts to Optimize and Improve Efficiencies in the Health Care System
- Mental Health-Related Disability and Employment Equity
- Residential Schools: Uncovering and Honouring the Truth
- Renewed Focus on an Old Problem: Youth Opioid use in Alberta from 2018-2021
- Evictions in Canada: Understanding the Causes and Consequences of Housing Instability
- Covid-19 Exposing Vulnerabilities in Migrant Care Workers in Canada: Recommendations



MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

10

Over the course of 2021, the
Edmonton Social Planning Council
had 10 media interviews and releases



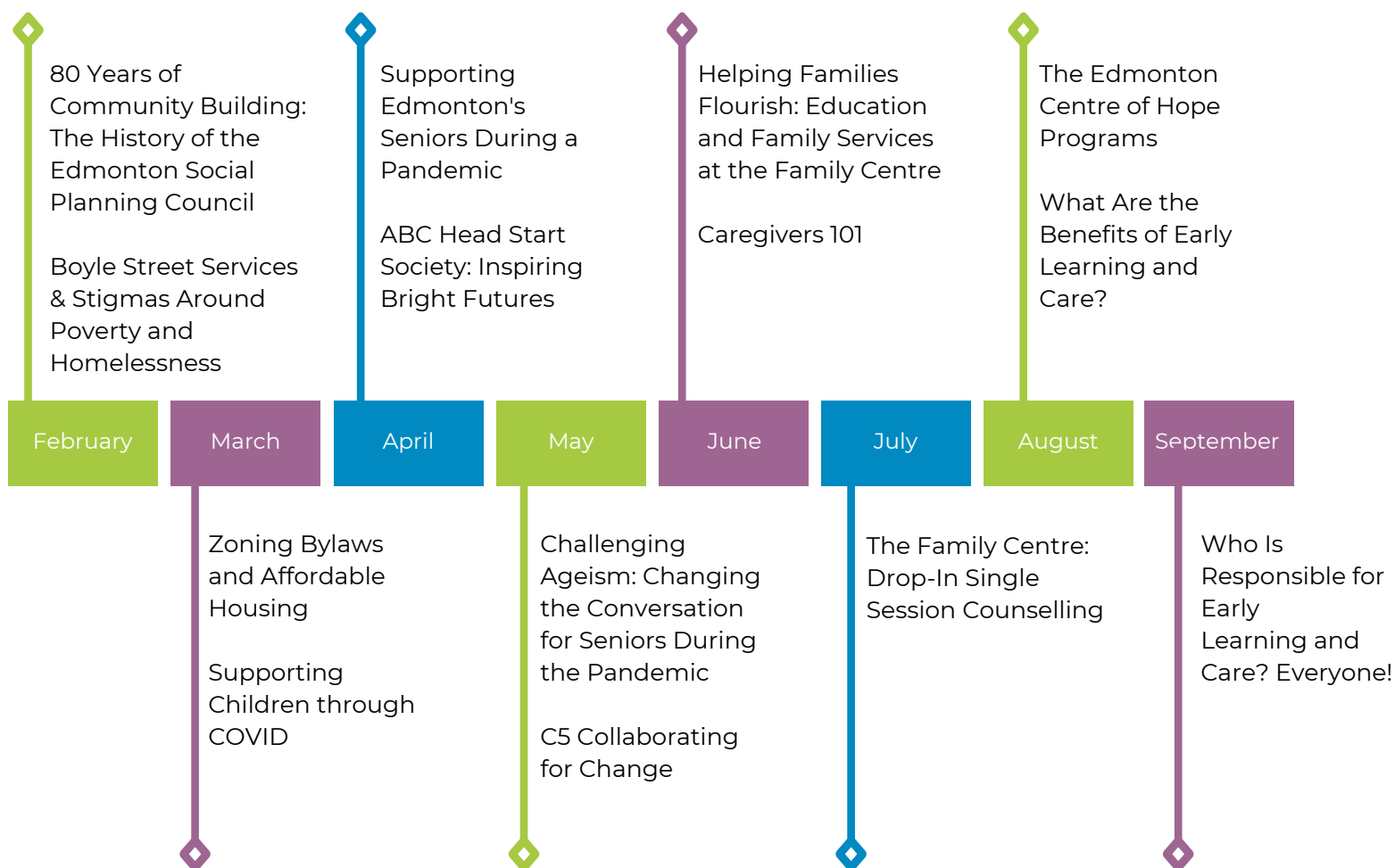
2021 Media Interviews and Releases

- January** Susan did an interview with EDify Magazine about responses to food security challenges in Edmonton during the COVID-19 pandemic, which was published in the April 2021 issue.
- May** Op-Ed published by Sydney and Brett in the Edmonton Journal about the need for more robust child benefits on a provincial level.
- July** Radio segment on 630Ched with Susan discussing why the Alberta 10-year rent subsidy program represents a big step forward in providing robust supports to renters in the province.
- News segment on 630Ched that interviewed Sydney after the launch of the Social Well-Being Tracker.
- CBC Edmonton Interview with Sydney discussing the Social Well-Being Tracker
- September** Op-ed published in the Edmonton Journal on child care being a municipal election issue by Brett, co-written with Jeff Bisanz and Jennifer Fischer-Summers
- Alberta Views re-published our article on the affordable housing panel's report and what it might mean for racialized populations.
- October** Susan had a CBC Radio interview with Mark Connelly regarding homelessness in Edmonton as an election issue
- November** CTV Edmonton interview with Susan on the new living wage numbers and network launch
- December** Sydney interviewed with CBC Edmonton News about inflation and cost of living.

LUNCH & LEARNS

14

ESPC's Lunch & Learn events are a series of engaging lunchtime talks about social issues and organizations that have an impact in our community. We continued to have our Lunch & Learn events on a virtual platform for 2021, hosting 14 events over the year.



“

I got details of the earlier history that I hadn't known and made links and connections with people and issues prominent in Edmonton.

The speakers were very engaging! Really enjoyed it

”



ESPC has a long-standing reputation for having our important work cited in other research reports and journals, both locally and internationally.

CITATIONS



Neighbourhood Dashboard
Holmgren, M.

Community Needs Assessment Proposal for Pioneer
Park Community Library
Frisse, S.

Belonging: "Stories of the Dignity and Resilience of
Immigrants"
State of Immigration and Settlement.

The Community Bond Experience in Montreal,
Quebec
Prince, J. and Sorin, V. *Innovations in Social Finance*

Growing With Lady Flower Gardens: Governance in a
Land-based Initiative Focused on Building
Community, Well-being and Social Equity Through
Food
Roszko, A. and Beckie, M. *Canadian Food Studies /
La Revue Canadienne Des études Sur l'alimentation*

Building Readiness for Inclusive Practice in
Mainstream Health Services: A Pre-Inclusion
Framework to Deconstruct Exclusion
Bourke, L., Mitchella, O., Shaburdina, Z., Malatzkyb,
C., Anam, M. and Farmer, J. *Social Science &
Medicine*

Devil in the Details
Sheloff, S. and Lambert, B. *Alberta Views Magazine*

The Ethical Obligation of the State to Hear and
Address Indigenous Claims for Justice
Sunga, S.

Using a Community of Practice Approach to
Respond to Food Insecurity During the COVID-19
Pandemic in Edmonton, Alberta
Lavriv, O.

Assessing Philanthropy's Role in Policy Change: A
Review of the Literature
Martin, J. *American Journal of Educaiton*

VOLUNTEERS

76

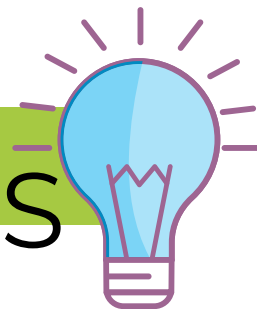
In 2021, a total of 76 generous volunteers contributed more than 805 hours of their time to ESPC. Volunteers contributed by writing Research Update reviews, The fACTivist newsletter articles, blog posts, supporting staff at online events, and serving on our Board of Directors and its committees.

My experience has exceeded my expectations. How the organization interacts with volunteers, in terms of providing feedback and even a small token of appreciation, was a pleasant surprise.



I've thoroughly enjoyed my time with ESPC over the past six months, and am looking forward to continued opportunities to contributing in meaningful ways in the new year! Thanks for all that you do!!

CAPACITY BUILDING EFFORTS



Presentations

Inter-city forum on social policy presentation to elected officials across Alberta municipalities.

Race-Based Data Report presentation to race-based data community group in Edmonton

PEO women's group presentation on COVID's impact on vulnerable Edmontonians

Small Business VT data presentation to Vital Topics Committee

PROBUS Service Club presentation on COVID's impact on vulnerable Edmontonians

Statement of Immigration Report presentation of the annual report to city council.

University of Alberta presentation to UofA business students

Social wellbeing tracker presentation to the City of Edmonton Social Development branch



Outreach

When ESPC staff provided research information, consultation, and support to other agencies/organizations. As well as partnerships ESPC had with other agencies/organizations over 2021.

ABC Headstart
Alberta Health Services
Alberta Living Wage Network
Alberta Not for Profit Network
BCCBiggs
Boyle Street Community Services
C5 Collaborative
Caregivers Alberta
City of Edmonton
Drive Happiness
Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations
Edmonton Coalition on Housing and Homelessness
Edmonton Council for Early Learning and Care
Edmonton's Foodbank
Edmonton Journal
Edmonton Public Schools
Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council

EndPoverty Edmonton
Explore Edmonton
Inclusion Alberta
Interfaith Centre
MacEwan University
Multicultural Family Resource Society
Muttart Foundation
Norwood Child and Family
PEO International
Resource Centre
S.C.O.N.A. Seniors Centre
SAGE Seniors Association
The Centre to End All Sexual Exploitation
The Family Centre
The Salvation Army
University of Alberta Business
Vibrant Communities Calgary
Vital Signs

105



ESPC MEMBERS

We're so pleased to have such a dedicated membership community. By the end of 2021 we had a total of 105 ESPC members. By getting involved with the Edmonton Social Planning Council, another voice is added to our message of positive social development and policy change. To join the ESPC membership program, this can be done through our website, www.edmontonsocialplanning.ca

DONATIONS

Donations help to produce research reports and publications that we make accessible free of charge. Donations allow us to take on bigger projects and make a greater impact in our community. The strength of our voice is dependent upon the support from people and organizations concerned about social issues. By contributing, you add your voice and help those who lack the opportunity to speak for themselves. ESPC is a non-profit organization with registered charity status (Charity Tax#107283194 RR 0001). Donations can be made directly through our website www.edmontonsocialplanning.ca, or through Canada Helps and Benevity.

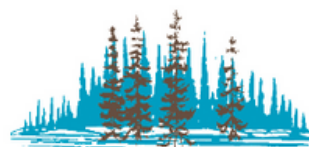
DONATE



ENDOWMENT FUND

ESPC established an endowment fund in 2017 through the Edmonton Community Foundation (www.ecfoundation.org). Giving to our endowment fund allow donors to provide lifelong gifts and support to our agencies. Contact the Edmonton Community Foundation for further information on how to donate and have a lasting impact for many years to come.

PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS



The Muttart Foundation



United Way
Alberta Capital Region



FCSS
Family & Community
Support Services

Edmonton



2021 AGM MINUTES

Edmonton Social Planning Council
2021 Annual General Meeting
May 27, 2021
5:30 – 6:30pm

WELCOME AND PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

The meeting was convened at 5:37 p.m. by Dave Trautman, President of the Edmonton Social Planning Council, who welcomed everyone and delivered a brief opening statement recognizing that we are having this meeting on traditional Treaty 6 land. Dave welcomed all ESPC members attending and introduced current Board members and staff members. Gwen thanked staff and volunteers for all of their work in planning the AGM.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: MOVED by Sandra McFadyen, seconded by Katherine Weaver to accept the agenda as presented.

MOTION: CARRIED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JULY 16, 2020

MOTION: MOVED by Peter Schalk, seconded by Paula Kirman to approve the minutes from the July 16, 2020 AGM as presented.

MOTION: CARRIED

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dave Trautman has been a member of ESPC's Board of Directors for six years in which he discussed the decline in faith in democracy. He spoke about how he admired the role that ESPC plays in creating effective policy decisions and how it works to advocate for democracy by providing facts for better governance.

He mentioned that the events on January 6th at the US capitol showed everyone how conspiracy thinking has become a serious threat to our open society, and the very idea of a collapsing US democracy was a strange notion six years ago. The psychological traits which can lead a person down to misinformation are present in most of us, "we all like people who agree with us, and we tend to reject unwelcome evidence."

Dave discussed how ESPC is in the business of gathering facts and providing data, helping people understand how complex and dynamic processes operate all around us, especially how these impact vulnerable populations. He highlighted how data helps government leaders understand reality, stressing the importance of data-driven decision making. ESPC is leading the role in meeting the need for verifiable data and provable research to back up major government or agency decisions.

Dave believes that ESPC must continue their work as advocates for democracy by continuing to get provable reality.

He highlighted how the COVID-19 pandemic amplified individuals' anxiety and believes it may be more difficult to live in a reality-based community in the future. Therefore, ESPC's role is critical in evidence-based advocacy and work.

Dave thanked everyone who is in attendance in the meeting, and for the honour of serving ESPC through this most unprecedented year.

OPERATIONS REPORT

Susan Morrissey, Executive Director, reflected on the impact of COVID-19 on the community and its individuals. The Council celebrated its 80th anniversary in 2020, reflecting back on the previous achievements and work that ESPC has done through their anniversary booklet, 80 Years of Community Building. She also thanked Jenn Rossiter and Brett Lambert on their work in completing this publication, with the help of ESPC's volunteers.

She acknowledged the Emergency Preparedness Plan, which was developed in early 2020, and the provision of equipment to help staff transition to work from home. ESPC's operations was not significantly disrupted as staff were able to continue with their work remotely. However, working from home still came with its challenges which include, online meetings, fear and anxiety of COVID-19, and determining how ESPC can remain relevant and continue to work with agencies and bring impact in the community amidst the pandemic.

ESPC staff rose to these challenges. Lunch & Learns were transitioned to an online format, which increased attendance to these events. Additionally, the website was upgraded to make it more user-friendly and engaging; eBlasts are being sent weekly; a blog section was developed for staff and volunteers to contribute to; and a COVID-19 resource page was created due to community needing access to relevant information. ESPC also increased its written influence through an increase in op-ed submissions.

Susan highlighted some of ESPC's interesting projects in 2020 in response to community needs. One such project was on anti-systemic racism completed for Edmonton Community Foundation and Muttart Foundation and a series of related blog posts on the topic. Another project was helping Boys & Girls Clubs

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Edmonton & Area and United Way determine which quadrants in Edmonton are considered lower income and vulnerable and in need of computer equipment to help youth and children study from home. Lastly, working with immigrants and newcomers through ESPC's work with the City of Edmonton.

Susan also highlighted the contribution and work of the volunteers. ESPC has seen an increase in the number of volunteers and staff are working to match them to meaningful experiences to enhance their skills and serve the organization.

Additionally, ESPC was involved in a number of advocacy activities with partner agencies provincially, locally, and nationally. Through these partnerships, we wrote letters to advocate for support for vulnerable individuals who would be most financially burdened by the pandemic.

Susan discussed some recent staff changes within the organization. Notably, John Kolkman's retirement from ESPC in early 2020. Sydney Sheloff was introduced as ESPC's new Research Officer. Susan also acknowledged staff changes in the beginning of 2021, as Sandro Ngo left the organization, and introduced Rowan El-Bialy who has assumed the role of Research

Coordinator. Through the course of 2020, ESPC also had practicum students from the University of Alberta and Concordia University, and a summer student work with us.

She discussed some of the continuing activities planned for 2021. ESPC is still involved with Vital Signs, the Alberta Child Poverty Report that will be released in Fall 2021 with ESPC's partners, the annual Living Wage report, and working with the Alberta Living Wage Network to advance that work provincially among other things.

ESPC has also developed the Social Well-Being Tracker Tool. Information on this tool is adapted from ESPC's Tracking the Trends report. The tool is available on the website and will be updated regularly. It was developed to help other not-for-profit organizations access this information to help with grant applications, program planning or strategy, and the ability to export the data to their reports.

Additionally, Susan highlighted the work of Jenn Rossiter and Tom Ndekezi in putting together a race-based data report, *Confronting Racism with Data: Why Canada Needs Disaggregated Race-Based Data*, which has been shared with the community and with Edmonton public school trustees. Susan thanked Jenn for the project's completion. ESPC is also finalizing the immigration and settlement report with a committee to the City of Edmonton, coming out in June 2021.

Susan provided an update on ESPC's work with the Alberta Living Wage Network. The network is working towards a living wage calculation and awareness in many municipalities throughout Alberta, and an accreditation program for employers. The network's goal is to encourage employers to pay living wages, and to emphasize the benefits of a living wage to the employer, employee, and the community.

She also highlighted a project with the Centre to End All Sexual Exploitation called Bridging the Affordability Gap

demonstration project which is soon to be completed. This project is offering an enhanced stream of support during the pandemic for vulnerable persons with histories of sexual exploitation. Results from this project will help enhance the discussion on universal basic income.

Susan also thanked the departing Board members, Jalene Anderson-Baron, Nicole Smith, and Dave Trautman for their work with ESPC. Susan acknowledged and thanked Dave for his six-year support of the organization's governance and operations.

Susan Morrissey, thanked the staff, volunteers, funders, and ESPC members for their continued support of ESPC's work in the sector and the community.

AWARD OF MERIT FOR ADVOCACY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

Jalene Anderson-Baron presented the Award of Merit for Advocacy of Social Justice to Bashir Mohamed who was in attendance to accept their award.

PRESENTATION OF FINANCIAL REPORT

Vanessa Zembal, Chair of the ESPC Finance and Audit committee invited Carla Walker, from Peterson Walker LLP to report on the 2020 Financials.

Carla Walker presented the 2020 Audited Financial statements.

- **MOTION:** MOVED by Vanessa Zembal, seconded by Danielle Dolgoy to approve the audited 2020 financial statements as presented.
- **MOTION:** CARRIED.
- **MOTION:** MOVED by Vanessa Zembal, seconded by Paula Kirman to appoint Peterson Walker LLP as Auditors for the 2021 year.
- **MOTION:** CARRIED.

Vanessa Zembal thanked Carla Walker for her work.

AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON BOARD RECRUITMENT

Peter Schalk discussed Article 6.1 of ESPC's registered by-laws outlining the rules for Board membership, eligibility, and composition.

CALLS for nominations on the floor

- No additional nominations.

Peter Schalk introduced the new nominees to the Board.

- Ashley Baxter (1st Term- 1st Year Candidate)
- Keith Goertzen (1st Term- 1st Year Candidate)
- Thomas Grenier (1st Term- 1st Year Candidate)
- Rhea Kachroo (1st Term- 1st Year Candidate)
- Denise Kirke (1st Term- 1st Year Candidate)

MOTION: MOVED by Peter Schalk, seconded by Paula Kirman to elect the above-mentioned candidate(s) to the Board of Directors to the Edmonton Social Planning Council for the 2021-2022 year.

MOTION: CARRIED.

Peter Schalk introduced the continuing Board members.

- Danielle Dolgoy (2nd year- 1st term candidate)
- Paula Kirman (2nd year- 1st term candidate)



MOTION: MOVED by Darlene Kowalchuk, seconded by Theresa Vladicka, to reelect the above-mentioned candidates to the Board of Directors of the Edmonton Social Planning Council for the 2021-2022 year.

MOTION: CARRIED.

OTHER BUSINESS

No further business called upon the floor.

ADJOURNMENT – (ADJOURNED AT 6:39 PM)

MOTION: MOVED by Paula Kirman, seconded by Danielle Dolgoy to adjourn the business portion of the 81st ESPC Annual General Meeting.

MOTION: CARRIED.



Contact

Edmonton Social Planning Council

10544 106 St suite 200, Edmonton, AB

T5H 2X6

(780) 423-2031

www.edmontonsocialplanning.ca

@edmontonspc

*We thank our community for your
continued support in the Edmonton
Social Planning Council.*

