
Valley Hospice Foundation



Annual Report 2023/2024

19 June 2024



valleyhospice.ca



Report from the Chair

Welcome to the Valley Hospice Foundation Annual General Meeting. Your active support and engagement are the engine of our organization and permit us to ensure excellent palliative care is being delivered throughout the Annapolis Valley and that exceptional care can be realized in the future.

If those words sound declarative and aspirational, they are. There is no doubt that new levels of excellence in palliative care and family support have been realized in the past few years but there remains much to be done.

The 2023/2024 term has been a year of stabilization and consolidation as personal, and resources begin to meet the basic needs. New initiatives at the provincial level and new ideas garnered through professional education and at national conferences have shone a bright light on the opportunities to achieve excellence. To this end VHF has paused, taken stock, and challenged itself to imagine how those routes to excellence might be travelled.

Our Strategic Plan 2024, attached to this report, will share with you our collective vision, informed by our partners in NSH and the community and drawing on the experience of those on whose shoulders we stand. We hope that you will find in it a desire to keep and reinforce the excellent care currently being provided in the Hospice and the Community as well as a recognition that more needs to be done, particularly in the community arena to support and augment the care that our caregiving teams are providing. Moreover, you will find a vision of concepts which could potentially create true concentrations of knowledge and effect.

We are unreservedly grateful for the time and effort not only of our professional caregivers but of the countless volunteers who mount our fund-raising events, beautify the gardens of the hospice, greet visitors, serve meals or simply attend our patients to bring peace and comfort in their journey. Our volunteer board has been both generous and energetic in their participation both at the Board table and on the projects. Without them we could not have delivered on our meager promises.

The enormous tributes received for our Music Therapist has more than recognized her talents and value as a care giver. She has set the standard and foundation for a program that we will see grow into the community soon.

You will hear about our new Grief Library, an idea borne from a national conference and championed by our Grief and Bereavement team, which even before it has been fully realized, has provided aid and assistance to those in need and inspiration to those who envision more potential for this exciting project.

So yes, we are excited, and we have a vision. We hope you will join us as a Board member or volunteer on one of the committees or in some other manner to realize this vision.

Gerry Morey, Chair

“Remember, there’s no such thing as a small act of kindness. Every act creates a ripple with no logical end.”

— Scott Adams

Fund Development Report

The Valley Hospice Foundation (VHF) Fund Development Committee had a fantastic 2023. As always, we as a committee received support from other VHF Board members and from our community at large with many acts of kindness and charity.

The Hike for Hospice & Palliative Care was held on May 7, 2023. The weather was perfect, and we had a sea of some 150 Merlot pink T-shirts out on the walk or volunteering. The Kentville Lions Club graciously hosted VHF at its location, East Coast Refrigeration and Air Conditioning sponsored our popular T-shirts, music was provided by Gerry Davis, and hikers walked Kentville’s Harvest Moon Trail and Miner’s Marsh for either 2 or 5 km. We had an “*I’m Hiking For...*” wall, which was poignant and meaningful. This event raised funds for enhancements at the Valley Hospice, programs to educate the community, services to support grief and bereavement, and excellence in patient care through professional development for staff and volunteers. Once again, we met our ambitious fundraising goal and are so grateful for the community support of the Hike, including many volunteers who themselves work in the hospice and palliative care arena.

Summer 2023 saw us busily planning the third and final *Holistay Raffle: Experiences That Make a Difference*. The Raffle officially launched in September 2023, and concluded with a wrap up reception at Maritime Express Cider Co. on January 13, 2024. This informal gathering featured music by Ben Robertson, and emcee Darrin Harvey of Rewind 89.3, along with host Gerry Morey, VHF Board Chair. It was a lovely gathering to close our campaign, award fabulous prizes, and gently welcome a new year. The funds raised from the 2023 Raffle are allocated to help fund our new Music Therapy program, and to supply end-of-life care bags to the home palliative care team.

Our newsletters remain an important means to keep our donors and community not only informed of VHF activities, but also educated about hospice and community-based palliative care. We issued Spring and Fall 2023 newsletters to share our key highlights and feature impactful family and caregiver stories. These newsletters also serve as a tool to generate funds, especially via the “Circle of Care” which remains a steady monthly giving program.

In February 2024, several VHF Board members enjoyed some time in Greenwood Arena at the newly-named Don Laidlaw 65+ Charity Classic hockey tournament, where we were also presented a cheque as the 2024 recipient of the proceeds of this annual event. Thank you, players and organizers!

Donors and special gifts are recognized on our virtual donor wall online, which is continually being updated. But we recognize that fund development is much more than fundraising events and targeted campaigns. Going forward, we will work to maintain – and deepen – our relationships with those who remain loyal VHF supporters long after a loved one has passed. This community is stronger together, and we will work to honour and celebrate this commitment in creative new ways.

Fund Development Committee Members: Terri Milton, Gail Gordon, Lynne Harrigan

Governance - Board Evaluation Committee

The purpose of the VHF Governance Committee is to build and maintain a comprehensive and effective governance structure that guides and supports the VHF Board of Directors and VHF.

A key emphasis of the Committee this year was to ensure action on the findings of the 2023 Board Evaluation and to continue work on Board self-evaluation. In particular, the 2023 Board Evaluation demonstrated the need to update the Board's strategic plan concentrating on the next three years.

Minor revisions were made to the Board evaluation tool based on feedback provided by participants in the 2023 evaluation. In addition, the Committee evaluated the feasibility of moving to an electronic format. Given the Board focus on the development of a revised strategic plan in the spring of 2024, the 2024 evaluation was administered in June 2024 using MSForms after submission of the new strategic plan in May.

The Board Evaluation Tool posed 59 questions in the following eight key areas:

- A. Board Roles and Responsibilities; Staffing & Equipping Board Members; Board Policies
- B. Board Committees and Meetings
- C. Strategic Planning
- D. Foundation Programs
- E. Board Oversight of Fund-Raising Activities, Financial Management & Legal Matters
- F. Board Oversight of Personnel Management
- G. Board Participation and Morale

The results will be tabulated and reported to the Board in September at the first meeting of the Board following the summer break.

Given a new strategic plan that proposes significant new activities for the Board in the upcoming years. It is expected that the Committee will need to review Board bylaws, policies and procedures over the next year to ensure they are consistent with planned actions.

Board Evaluation Committee: Sue Thomas, Gerry Morey, and Colin Marshall

Finance Committee Report

The Finance Committee is responsible for the oversight of all financial matters and assists the Board in fulfilling its duties regarding financial stewardship, reporting, and legal compliance.

The Valley Hospice Foundation adheres to a Board approved annual budget. The budget is a result of a process that is led and monitored by the Finance Committee, and involves input from the Executive, Fund Development, and HR/Program team.

Total assets of the Valley Hospice Foundation as of March 31, 2024, are recorded to be: \$1,260,737.

The portion of assets that are invested long-term is valued at \$757,698, and we also hold short-term instruments valued at \$512,723. Investments are strategically invested on both a long and short-term basis, among several classes of assets to reduce the risk of investment volatility.

The Valley Hospice Foundation's audited statements are available to the public for review.

Our 2023/24 financial results reflect that the Foundation is experiencing successes in the support of Palliative care services in our community, most notably with the commencement of the Music Therapy Program.

This past year we provided \$95,658 in grants and program support. In addition to Music Therapy, donations from our community ensured the support of:

- Educational grants for our professional teams,
- Additional staff time to respond to increased demands for Grief and Bereavement and assist with the development of new programs,
- "Friends in Bereavement" support groups throughout the Valley,
- "Care and Comfort" items to meet personal and special needs of patients and families,
- Hospice gardens and building enhancements, and a well-stocked family kitchen.

The Finance Committee was pleased to participate in the creation of our new strategic plan and looks forward to the efficient and effective use of donated funds in the delivery of the plan.

- Donations to the foundation were up significantly from the previous year. Much of this is due to the tireless efforts of our fundraising committee and staff. We were also the grateful recipient of several bequests.
- 2023/24 marked the commencement of two programs for which the Foundation has successfully lobbied: the Music Therapy Program and most recently The Grief Library.
- The Finance Committee is pleased that the Hospice team and the Community Palliative Care team now have representation on the Hospice Board. The input of these individuals offers unique insight into the need for specific programs and services and helps the Foundation in determining the best allocation of donated resources.

Finance Committee: Mike Townsend, Chris Maynard and Wayne Woodman

Succession Planning and Nominating Committee

The Valley Hospice Foundation will see the departure of two Directors whose terms expire in 2024 and one who is retiring from the Foundation after 2 years. One Director whose term expires in 2024 has re-offered for another term.

The Foundation was fortunate to have four applications to join the Foundation. One individual withdrew their application due to change in personal circumstances. Two excellent candidates are nominated for the Foundation.

The SPAN Committee continues to search for qualified individuals for the areas of Fund Development, Communications, Event Planning, a representative of the Business Community and First Nations representation. The Foundation is particularly interested in having representation from the western portion of its region. This search will continue, and candidates may be proposed to the Foundation through the year.

Note: Directors shall be eligible for re-election in accordance with Article 24 of the By-Laws of the Valley Hospice Foundation.

If these recommendations are approved, the Board for 2024-2025 will be:

Name	End of term on Board
Louise Cloutier	31 March 2027
Leo Glavine	31 March 2025
Lynn Harrigan	31 March 2026
Chris Maynard	31 March 2027
Gerry Morey	31 March 2026
Anita Nickerson	31 March 2027
Sue Thomas	31 March 2025
Mike Townsend	31 March 2026
Wayne Woodman	31 March 2025

SPAN Committee: Gerry Morey, Terri Milton and Wayne Woodman