**LCCJ Discussion**

**Response to COVID-19**

**April 22nd, 2020**

**Executive Directors Report**

**The following is a summary of items for you to consider in preparation for a fulsome discussion about the COVID-19 Pandemic and its potential implications for LCCJ.**

**BUDGET 2020 / 21 Attached.**

When considering making changes to the budget is important to note, in the 20/21 budget passed at the last board meeting (column B), almost all of the fundraising revenues for 20/21 (Municipal, County of Lanark, Civic Groups, Individual Donations, Golf Tournament, Craig Cardiff Concert, Carry Forward) were fundraised in 19/20. Also, I expect that we will receive $48,500 from the Ministry of Children Community and Social Services, as the grant has already been approved, the documents have been signed, and we are just waiting for the first transfer payment (which may be slightly delayed due to the pandemic and the recent change of Ministries). We have also received the funding from the PDCF. I was asked by the PDCF to submit amendments, as a response to COVID-19, and those amendments were submitted and approved. I also do not think that the $6000 from the County of Lanark will be pulled at this time as it is 3-year funding, and they have very little reporting requirements, but I will be requesting that these funds go to adult diversion. I have been informed that the $7,500 from the Department of Justice for Victims and Survivors of Crime Week is suspended until further notice. Finally, I have spoken with the United Way East Ontario and they will continue to fund us at the current rate of $1000 per quarter at least until the end of December. The only other questionable revenue is the $2000 from the Polar Bear Plunge. Accordingly, as things stand at this point in time, (with the understanding that most likely there are numerous variables that could change), it is my estimation that if we were to do nothing this fiscal year the current year would be largely unaffected. To that effect, when having discussions about the impact of COVID-19 on the organization’s finances, we are talking about its effect on our 21/22 fiscal year.

The possible, known or likely effects of COVID-19 on our 21/22 budget are:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Fundraising** | Likely | Individual Donations: less individual donations as there are more pressing needs, less people working, and therefore less disposable income and many donors have experienced a significant drop in their investments |  |
|  | Likely | Civic Groups: Less or no civic group donations because their revenues will also be reduced, we will be limited in providing a presentation, and there will be a greater demand for donations for more pressing needs like food, shelter, safety. |  |
|  | Likely | Municipalities: Less municipal donations because we will be limited in providing a presentation, and there will be a greater demand for donations for more pressing needs like food, shelter, safety |  |
|  | Likely | Craig Cardiff Concert: may never happen |  |
|  | Likely | Golf Tournament: may be cancelled. However, we are tentatively trying to reschedule it to mid-September. |  |
|  | Possible | Polar Bear Plunge: may be cancelled possibly due to a second wave of COVID -19, or could it be re-imagined under social distancing with less revenue. | \*Cancellation of the plunge would reduce current budget by $2000 |
| **Grants** | Known | Youth Justice Committee: diversion funding is expected but may be slightly delayed |  |
|  | Known | United Way Adult Diversion: will continue to be funded at current levels ($1000 quarter) until the end of September and possibly to the end of December. There may be a new call for proposals as a response to COVID-19 but this is not yet decided. | \*Note: there were $375,000 in submissions but only $133 to give |
|  | Possible | United Way BE STRONG 2.0 Youth Centres: may not be funded, as funds may be prioritized to more critical needs, and the youth centres are currently closed. Funding decisions will be delayed until the end of September and possibly to the end of December. There may be a new call for proposals as a response to COVID-19, but this is not yet decided. | \*Note: there were $375,000 in submissions but only $133 to give |
|  | Known | BE STRONG 2.0 Schools: may not be funded, as funds may be prioritized to more critical needs, and the schools are currently closed.  Commonwell is not accepting application in 2020. | Note: an application was submitted to Commonwell but I was informed of the temporary suspension of grants for 2020 |

**Funding Summary**

* MCCSS – $48,500 Secured
* PDCF – $10,000 Secured
* Department of Justice Victims and Survivors of Crime Week – $7,500 on hold
* United Way Current – $3000 will continue until at least December 2020
* United Way Adult Diversion – $14,000 no confirmation
* United Way BeStrong 2.0 – $15,000 no confirmation
* Commonwell BeStrong 2.0 – $12,000 not available

**BIG QUESTIONS ABOUT FUNDING**:

What are the ethical considerations around fundraising for a service like LCCJ when there are more pressing critical needs like, food, shelter and safety?

What are the ethical considerations around using government, civic, municipal and individual funds when we are not actively providing any programming. Yet?

Should funds from the Golf Tournament, Craig Cardiff Concert or Polar Bear Plunge go to another agency that is meeting COVID-19 critical needs if they happen at all?

Is there a new program that we should be starting as a response to COVID-19?

**Staffing**:

Employee wages are the largest expense to LCCJ. Accordingly, we should carefully consider the following scenarios (see COVID-19 20/21 Budget). As of Saturday April 13th, we are eligible for the 75% government wage subsidy for April and May, as we will be able to show a 30% loss in revenue from those months in 2020 when we compare to the same months to 2019. We can not show a 15% revenue loss for March 2020, when we compare to March 2019, so we can not claim a wage subsidy for March. We will also have a 30% loss in June which is not currently part of the government proposed wage subsidy. However, given the government wage subsidy is likely to continue into June, as a result of the current COVID-19 projections. Accordingly, if you refer to the COVID -19 draft budget I have assumed 3 months of government wage subsidy, and it is the amount of revenue we would expect to receive if we were to keep staff time at the current hours (Column C, Row 32) and the revenue we would receive if we were to reduce staff time (Column D, Row 32). We could keep staff hours the same, (Column C), reduce staff hours (Column D) , or lay-off staff temporarily for 6 months (Column E). Reducing staff time would allow us to save the money that we raised last year (2019/20), for next year (21/22), as we are not likely not going to be able to fundraise in (20/21), as projected. I have made a 2020/21 projection of fundraising table on the third tab. Please keep in mind that the fundraising in 2020/21 is for 2021/22.

However, when considering the possibility of reducing staff hours or laying off staff, it is important to note the following in developing an opinion.

**Staffing** Joellen 3 days week / Sheri 4 days a week / Theresa 6 hours a week

**Sheri:** 3 days diversion, 1-day restorative families

* Sheri and Joellen are better off going on EI before their hours are reduced as it changes the amount for which they are eligible
* Sheri would possibly be entitled to significant compensation (2 weeks for every year worked if she was to consider this a dismissal, and not a temporary layoff as is proposed)
* If staff is laid off, there is always the risk that they find another job, or don’t return for other reasons. Hiring / retraining staff is expensive, time consuming and will disrupt continuity further.
* Government message all along has been that they want to keep people employed even if they are not working and they have provided the 75% wage subsidy to help charities keep their staff employed. However, at the present time LCCJ is able to keep its employees employed because we fundraised last year for this year. Is it ethical to accept the government wage subsidy when it is not currently needed to keep staff employed?
* Consideration needs to be given around the ethics of spending government money and donated money but not providing the programs yet. However, there is significant progress in program planning during COVID-19.
* What staff is doing over the next two months – In consultation with Sheri we developed a workplan for approximately the next two months. (see attached workplans). We have effectively demonstrated that staff is needed to maintain volunteers, develop future programs and materials, gather data to better understand the effectiveness of our programs and other administrative duties.
* We are in the process of developing the skills and resources necessary to provide on-line programs, gather information about providing on-line program provision.

**Programming**

Programs are temporarily somewhat on hold (Sheri is still providing telephone support and information to clients, families and volunteers), and we are hoping to still provide in-person services this fiscal year when physical distancing is lifted.

More importantly we are investigating opportunities to provide on-line services and communicating with other agencies to see what they are doing to provide services on-line.

There is a large learning curve for staff and facilitators to provide on-line programming and considerations need to be made for:

Technology: I have asked United Way to provide us with 14 smartphones with data to run the teen parenting discussion groups on-line, and diversion forums on-line. I think it is likely that we will get these phones.

Accessibility: are clients and facilitators able to navigate ZOOM or other platforms – how do we educate them how to use the chosen platform?

Training: who, what, how do we train facilitators to use the platform to conduct forums and are facilitators willing to conduct on-line forums

Confidentiality: how do we protect client confidentiality when they are at home with other family members around or on-line? There is a need to set confidentiality guidelines.

Integrity and Effectiveness: Can we effectively run a forum on-line without compromising the integrity of the restorative process, or the quality of the services that we have provided for the past 19 years.

\*MCCSS has said we can use ZOOM for now. However, they currently use Microsoft Teams. Other YJC programs reported using ZOOM and Teams for other diversion programs successfully.

\*MCCSS has said we can be creative in how we respond to open cases and do our best to proceed.

**Opportunities for Other Programming**:

COVID-19 had forced us to rethink how we work and the way we are delivering programs and services. There are many critical needs in the community to be addressed. There is a need for a psychosocial response in coping with a pandemic both during the pandemic and in recovering from the pandemic. The big question is: what opportunities exist for LCCJ to support our community now and in recovering from the pandemic.

Proposal: That a few key facilitators, board members and staff meet to discuss other opportunities for programming that accord with our mission to provide and promote the community use of restorative practices. How does our vision of a community that embraces restorative practices to repair harm, build community and strengthen relationships apply to the COVID-19 pandemic?

The following are possible ideas to discuss about other programming:

Diversion:

* What are some of the challenges and opportunities for doing on-line community justice forums?
* It has been reported that there in a dramatic increase in the number of domestic violence cases during the pandemic because of drug and alcohol abuse, people staying at home for longer periods of time giving rise to more opportunities for conflict, and the higher levels of stress that many families/relationships are experiencing. Accordingly, is there an opportunity for LCCJ to strategize around a pilot project that would provide restorative justice forums in low-level domestic violence cases to free up the court back-log that is sure to exist once the court re-opens, and prevent these cases from being dismissed or withdrawn without being addressed. I have been in contact with Erin Lee of Lanark County Interval House and I will be reaching out to the Victim Witness Support Program, then the Crowns for support. This will serve to increase our stats, follow our mission, meet the needs of the justice system, and further the use of restorative justice in Lanark County.

Decision: We need to consider a grant for this pilot project, possibly from the Department of Justice, Law Foundation or the Trillium Foundation.

Restorative Families:

* Can we do a teen parenting discussion groups on-line?
* Is there some existing literature, or workbook about restorative families that could be distributed to families who are struggling at home? Perhaps county wide?
* Sheri is still able to provide telephone support and referrals to families in conflict with a youth in their lives – how do we facilitate this further?
* Can we run restorative families circles on-line? What are the implications?

Note: Lanark, Leeds & Grenville District Health Unit is unable to partner at this time but I will reach out to Family and Children’s Services of Lanark, Leeds and Grenville who have Triple P trainers or Children’s Resources on Wheels or Lanark County Mental Health for a general teen parenting program that is not Triple P based.

BE STRONG 2.0 Youth Centres:

1. Can BE STRONG 2.0 in Youth Centres be re-structured?

BE STRONG 2.0 Schools:

1. Can BE STRONG 2.0 in Schools be re-structured and does it need to be? Should we be looking at a bigger grant to get this program going again (eg. Trillium), and provide some much-needed additional funding for next year. Or
2. I have spoken with United Way and they are possibly interested in providing us some support to run on-line circles for schools. Fraser Scantlebury is going to speak with his board member who is also on the board of education.

Other:

1. Is there a way we can use social media to support people in their homes to use restorative practices? Can we start a restorative families, or restorative homes public education campaign? I suggested this idea to United Way as a “restorative minute” video social media campaign, and Fraser also really like this idea and was going to reach out to MARCOM the communications company that United Way uses and was willing to consider funding this communication strategy.

There are clearly numerous ways restorative practices can be used in the home, workplace, school, community and in relationships. How can we still meet our mission in a meaningful way and satisfies our funders?