



Greater Fredericton Social Innovation - President's Report 2021 **Submitted by: Bill MacKenzie**

GFSI has continued to work through the Covid-19 public health constraints, making progress on many important projects. We were initially working fully remotely but have started to meet together respecting social distancing requirements, sometimes having a mix of people joining us remotely and in-person.

I will not say much about individual projects as many of those will be covered under the GFSI and CIN annual reports.

GFSI is the host Agency for the for the Fredericton area Community Inclusion Network. This is one of twelve(12) such networks around the Province. Through the first two poverty reduction plans the management board has provided oversight for the CIN work. With the increasing number of projects at both GFSI and CIN we have put in place a separate CIN Advisory Committee or Sounding Board that would advice on the development and implementation of the Fredericton region poverty reduction plan. The CIN Advisory Committee is chaired by the Past-President of the GFSI management committee, Shirley Cleave. Shirley and Susanne continue to participate in regular GFSI management committee meetings. Susanne, Shirley and I participated in two and one half days of ESIC meetings this week that will lead up to the development of a new two year regional plan for each of the 12 regions. We will be signing a new contract next week for 18 months of funding. ESIC will be introducing audits of CINs. A number of CINs will be audited each year. ESIC will cover the costs for this and share the results with the CINs.

GFSI continues to work towards strengthening the overall non-profit sector in Fredericton. The Non-profit data project continues with a second round of non-profits working through the process. Through the continued generosity of the Windsor Foundation we have been able to provide meeting space at no charge to area non-profits.

Planning Exercise

GFSI initiated a planning exercise that culminated in a Management Board Planning meeting on June 11th. There were three major elements to this exercise, which is still a work in progress:

1. SOAR Survey presentation and discussion
2. Lesson from living with Covid
3. Identify 3 to 4 social priorities for GFSI.

We started with a review of our Vision and Values. You can find these on our Web page. We also reminded participants of the GFSI Statement of Purpose.

SECOND SLIDE

To relieve poverty and benefit the community of Greater Fredericton by providing social planning to advance comprehensive community strategies guided by research, analysis and community defined goals.

THIRD SLIDE

A SOAR analysis is a strategic planning technique that helps organizations focus on their current strengths and opportunities and create a vision of future aspirations and results. In the not-for-profit sector, SOAR is often used in place of a SWOT Analysis as it utilizes a more positive and aspirational approach. We were supported in this exercise by Michael Hadrovic. Michael is a member of our local Civic Tech community, who approached us as way of completing a course requirement for an Organizational Behaviour course he started at York University prior to relocating to Fredericton. SOAR was a good place to start because it focuses an organization on its current strengths and vision for developing its strategic plan.

Under **STRENGTHS** we looked at: What can we build on? Under **OPPORTUNITIES** we looked at: What are our stakeholders asking for and what are the opportunities for GFSI to have impact? In the **ASPIRATIONS** discussions we looked at: What do we care deeply about? For **RESULTS** it is important to consider: How do we know we are succeeding? What does success look like?

Lessons from Living with COVID

This part of the conversation looked at three questions:

- i. How has Covid changed the socio-economic situation in the Greater Fredericton area?
- ii. How has Covid changed how GFSI does business?
- iii. What lessons have we learned for the future?

Getting past Covid doesn't mean that everything will or should just go back to the way things were before without some critical thought about lessons learned. Shirley Cleave facilitated this portion of the afternoon.

SLIDE FOUR

What I want to leave off with is where we ended up on the afternoon of June 11th. Scott Henwood found an on-line tool that he used to facilitate a conversation that pulled the elements of the day together. It was here that we wanted to identify 3 to 4 social priorities for GFSI based on our strengths and aspirations, and drawing on the lessons from living with Covid. But we ended up with a little more on our work plan than just social priorities. The six blue boxes were the key elements of the discussion. We did identify three social priorities. Another important element of work is the Internal GFSI review. You probably can't read the content of all the attached little boxes but an important one that started us down this road is the question linked to the Internal Review. "How do we continue to evolve to stay relevant/ address the right stuff". We started a by-laws review that we were not able to complete in time to give proper notice of proposed changes for this meeting so they will be coming to a future meeting of the Stewardship Committee. We will also be looking at ways to better engage the Stewardship Board. The GFSI by-laws envisioned a larger role for the Stewardship Board than how we have been operating in recent years.

SLIDE FIVE - So What Next?

Who are we: Internal GFSI Review

We will bring a conversation about by-laws to the next Stewardship Board meeting.

How do we do our business: Community Engagement Social Equality/Justice

You can find our solidarity statement on the GFSI website where we denounce social injustice and commit to work for social equality.

We are committed to engage community in our work and work to advance social equality.

What we want to do: Food Security Housing Basic Annual Income

We need to have a further conversation about process at the Management Board but we plan to put small teams together to put together work plans for each of these. We plan to invite Stewardship Committee members to participate in these teams if they have interest. You will hear when we get to Susanne's and Sandi's presentations that we are working in a number of areas related to food security and housing. Basic annual income is a new area of work but there are a number of potential partners we can reach out to.

Wrap-up

GFSI could not continue to achieve as much as it has without our ability to host so many great students for their social action placements.

Meredith Langille joined GFSI for a Renaissance College project. She stayed with us for two years and recently left to return to school. Hayley AuCoin joined us following her Renaissance College placement and will be with us for the next year.

In concluding, I would also like to thank all of you for your continued support of GFSI.