



*Working towards a healthy, just and
inclusive community*



**Edmonton Social
Planning Council**

Annual Report 2006

ANNUAL REPORT 2006

OUR VISION

A healthy, just and inclusive community.

OUR MISSION

To provide leadership to the community and its organizations in addressing social issues and effecting changes to social policy.

OUR GOALS

To undertake research into the nature and magnitude of social issues in the community.

To increase public awareness and understanding of current social issues and be an independent voice in the community.

To encourage public participation in the development of social policies and the implementation of programs.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT



The Edmonton Social Planning Council (ESPC) had been on the “at risk” species list among the United Way member agencies.

However, rather than heading in the direction of an endangered species, the Council has revived and is headed for a bright future.

Since the last Annual General Meeting, the Council has met many challenges, produced a significant amount of quality social planning research and well-balanced published opinion.

Over the past year, under the effective leadership of our Executive Director, Susan Morrissey, the Council has moved from its old location, revived the resource room, coped with significant staff changes, produced the fACTivist, begun work on making the website more interactive and user-friendly, and after a hiatus too long to report here, published the 2007 edition of *Tracking the Trends*.

Other accomplishments are detailed throughout this report.

On governance matters, the Board of Directors of the ESPC has seen several changes in membership through resignations and secondments during the year.

There is one long-serving member of the Board who has reached the end of his term. Treasurer Terry Andersen has worked diligently on improving our accounting and other internal procedures and made a big contribution to developing a dynamic website. I hope Terry will join the Board again in the future.

Other Board members have been through their own share of personal changes in the last year. Two babies have been born and one doctoral thesis is nearing completion.

Change is constant in our lives. So long as we keep our feet on the ground and our eyes on the stars, we should be okay.

Our goal of building a healthy, just and inclusive community may not be realized by the next AGM, but on behalf of the Board of Directors - new and returning - I am confident we are heading there.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Douglas Meggison". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Douglas Meggison

Board President

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT



As our team prepares for our first of many press conferences yet to come, I reflect back on 2006 and the projects and initiatives the Staff and Board undertook to get us where we are today.

Probably one of the biggest events in 2006 was the move of the Council offices to our new location. Although only a few blocks west, our staff had their work cut out for them when it came to sifting through the many years of archived information and resources the Council had accumulated. We are happy to be in our new home with a re-opened and expanded resource library.

As with other organizations, the Council experienced changes in staffing in 2006. We are excited with the wealth of new knowledge and experience our current staff possess. We are also indebted to the employees who left the Council in 2006. They have left their imprint on our collective efforts to move social policy in the right direction - to provide leadership in the community in addressing social issues.

Likewise, we had movement at our Board level with some members leaving while others joined. My thanks to all of our Board for providing the clear direction and leadership that was needed to move the Council forward and their commitment to be responsible citizens in our community.

I would be remiss if I did not mention our core funder the United Way of the Alberta Capital Region. The support and encouragement from their staff has been both an inspiration and an example of the collective efforts that can make a difference.

Last, but by no means least, my thanks to the many ESPC members who continue to renew their membership, attend Council functions and support our work. The Council's greatest strength is in lending our collective voice to social justice issues in our community.

So, in closing I thank the many individuals who were a part of the Council in 2006 and say to each and every one of you, "what a difference a year makes."

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Morrissey". The signature is written in a dark blue or black ink.

Susan Morrissey
Executive Director

2006 ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

An Active Office...

- ◆ Move to new office (Jul '06)
 - ◆ Resource room re-opened (Sep '06)
 - ◆ On-line catalogue launched (Nov '06)
-

Active Communication...

Reports Released

- ◆ Social Inclusion Health Indicators: A Framework for Addressing the Social Determinants of Health - by Phil O'Hara (Oct '06)
-

Projects/ Publications in Development

- ◆ Living Wage Campaign (Public Interest Alberta)
 - ◆ Voices from our Neighbourhoods Project (Action for Healthy Communities)
 - ◆ *the fACTivist* newsletter
-

Opinion Editorials/ Media

- ◆ Tories Slow to Give Decent Income to Poorest Albertans (Edmonton Journal, Jun 26, '06)
 - ◆ Alberta Families Deserve a Ticket Out of Poverty (Edmonton Journal, Sep 4, '06)
 - ◆ Focus on Social Health Key to a More Inclusive City: ESPC Report says removing barriers to inclusion is critical to improving health status (Edmonton Journal, Oct 23, '06)
-

Active Collaboration ...

Committees/ Coalitions

- ◆ Joint Stakeholders Committee on Children and Poverty
 - ◆ Strategic Alliance on Low-Income Issues
 - ◆ Alberta Social and Health Equity Network (ASHEN)
 - ◆ Urban Core Support Network (UCSN)
 - ◆ Living Wage Task Force (Public Interest Alberta)
 - ◆ Downtown East Re-development Committee
 - ◆ Vibrant Communities Edmonton Leadership Council
-

Consultations

- ◆ Alberta Human Resource and Employment Standards Review (Jun '06)
 - ◆ City of Edmonton Municipal Plan (Oct '06)
 - ◆ Voices from our Neighborhoods Project funding applications (Fall '06)
 - ◆ Edmonton Police Service and Downtown Business Association Community Crime Congress (Jun '06)
-

"[After the Council's presentation] several students asked me how they could become engaged in research, policy analysis and advocacy around low income issues. ... They became inspired to consider a social policy analysis stream in their future social work education."

- Maria Smyth, Instructor, Grant MacEwan College Social Work Program

Active in the Community...

Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Red Deer College Nursing Students (Feb '06)◆ MacEwan College Health Promotions Students (Oct '06)◆ MacEwan College Social Work Students (Oct '06)◆ Kings University College Day to Eradicate Poverty (Oct '06)
Events Hosted	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Annual General Meeting (May '06)◆ ESPC Open House (Sep '06)◆ Seasonal Celebration, co-hosted with Alcoholics Anonymous (Dec '06)
Events Participated In	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Philia Dialogues on Social Inclusion (Jan '06)◆ Public Interest Alberta (PIA) Forum (Mar '06)◆ Urban Core Support Network Inner City BBQ (Jul '06)◆ United Way 2006 Campaign Kick-off (Sep '06)◆ Edmonton Homeless Count (Oct '06)
Conferences Attended	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Alberta Community Development Conference on Social Inclusion (Calgary, Feb '06)◆ United Way Exec. Director Retreat (Jasper, Apr '06)◆ Pan-Canadian Social Planning Council Meeting (Toronto, Apr '06)◆ Alberta Housing Coalition Conference (Edmonton, Nov '06)◆ Get Rich & Die Trying: The Future Implications on Healthcare for Albertans (MacEwan College, Nov '06)

2007 PROJECTS & GOALS

More Communication...

Publications/ Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ <i>Tracking the Trends: Social Health in Edmonton</i>◆ Working Poor Project (in partnership with Vibrant Communities Edmonton and United Way of the Alberta Capital Region)◆ <i>the fACTivist</i> newsletter (quarterly)◆ Reviewing/ revitalizing past ESPC publications and resources◆ Continue building Resource Library collection◆ Rebuild website to improve interactive capacity
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More Community Collaboration & Participation...

Members/ Volunteers/ Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Add value for our members◆ Bring community into ESPC - volunteers◆ Continue to build and strengthen partnerships
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ESPC Resource Library

The ESPC is proud to have re-opened its resource library in 2006. We will be continuing to actively update this rich source of current and historical information.



Our collection contains a unique selection of publications focused primarily on Edmonton and Alberta. Some of the major subjects covered in our collection include:

- ◆ Non-profit Governance
- ◆ Housing
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Health
- ◆ Urban Issues
- ◆ Aboriginal Issues
- ◆ Social Services
- ◆ Social Assistance
- ◆ Poverty
- ◆ Income Security
- ◆ Children & Youth
- ◆ Labour Market & Employment

All people working on (or just interested in) social issues are welcome to search through our collection, which can be accessed at our office or through the on-line catalogue on our website.

“Having the students hear [the Council] speaking about and using concepts such as health/social determinants was a wonderful reinforcement of the approach we are trying to develop in the nursing department.”

- Liz Hagell, Instructor, Red Deer College Nursing Program

ESPC Membership

The strength of our voice and our role in the community is based on the support of people and organizations concerned about social issues. We thank all of our new and renewing members - your support is invaluable.

Members of the ESPC add their voices to our message of positive social development and policy change. Our members also benefit by:

- ◆ **Staying informed** - ESPC members are the first to receive our newsletters, publications, and other updates.
- ◆ **Getting involved** - Members have a say in the direction of the organization by voting for our board of directors, and are eligible to serve on the board.
- ◆ **Supporting their community** - The contributions of members help us to remain at the forefront regarding social issues.

One of the Council's top priorities over the next year is to identify new ways to keep our members informed and allow them to have input into the Council and engage in discussions around low-income issues. The more our collective voice reflects the diversity of our city, the more we can ensure that all voices are heard.

Major Partnerships

Public Interest Alberta

ESPC Active on PIA Living Wage Task Force



Public Interest Alberta

The Council has been an active member of Public Interest Alberta's Living Wage Task Force since its inception. The task force is a network of representatives from non-profit organizations across Alberta who are working on the issue of low wages.

The aim of the task force is to ensure that anyone working full-time earns enough income to maintain a safe, healthy standard of living.

In fall 2006, PIA contracted the ESPC to produce a report outlining the results of its province-wide survey, which asked Albertans to estimate the cost of maintaining a safe, healthy standard of living in their communities. The report, released in early 2007, also analyses recent data on income and employment. The report will serve as the foundation for PIA's future advocacy around establishing Living Wage policies at the municipal and provincial levels.

Visit PIA's website (www.pialberta.org/) to learn more, or to read the report.

"EMCN appreciates the accomplishments of the Edmonton Social Planning Council... and recognize[s] that there is a continuing need in our city for an agency that takes initiative in addressing social issues and effecting changes to social policy..."

- Ralph Paufler, Associate Director, Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers

Action for Healthy Communities

ESPC Begins Evaluation: Voices from our Neighbourhoods



Since early 2006, the Council has supported Action for Healthy Communities in making its vision of the *Voices from our Neighbourhoods* project a reality. The project aims to empower and engage the members of 10 inner city neighbourhoods by bringing them together to discuss and explore the issues in their communities. This will be done through a series of dialogue sessions and the development of interactive projects to be led by community members.

In the fall of 2006, Action for Healthy Communities contracted the ESPC to be the external evaluator for the *Voices* project. The current contract expires in fall 2007, and the Council hopes to have it renewed for the remaining two years of the project.

Visit A4HC's website (www.a4hc.ca) to learn more about their initiatives.

2007 BOARD CANDIDATE BIOGRAPHIES

First Term Candidates:



Greg Farrants is a geography studies major from St. Albert. He is active in peace and solidarity organizations in Edmonton. Greg works in urban and rural planning and is also a part-time lifeguard.



Ann Semotiuk has worked in health care in a variety of roles and settings since moving to Edmonton in 1979. She holds a B.A. in Political Science, a BSW and an MHSA (Health Services Admin).

Ann has worked in Home Care since 1991, and is currently the Program Lead for Support Services in Home Living. Her focus is on implementing effective strategies and developing strong partnerships.



Michael Sidra emigrated to Edmonton from Sudan with his family as a young child, and now lives in Strathcona County with his wife and daughter.

Michael worked in the Athabasca-Slave Lake region for many years after becoming certified as a public health inspector. He recently joined the Capital Health Region, and has been with the ESPC since October 2005.

Continuing 1st Term Candidates:



Larry Brockman has worked in community service organizations for 25 years, fulfilling roles ranging from receptionist to Executive Director. He has also served on a number of boards, ranging from national organizations to small community groups.

Larry has broad experience in organizational planning and collaboration, having facilitated many planning workshops. As an inner-city resident, Larry's connection to the ESPC began in the 1980's when he sought the Council's support on issues affecting Boyle Street and McCauley.



Diane Dennis is a Ph.D. candidate in Human Ecology at the U of A. Before beginning her current studies, Diane worked as a independent research consultant for several years, and then as a project manager at the U of A Population Research Laboratory.

Diane's evaluation and policy research has focused primarily on the well-being of families and children. Her current research explores how economic insecurity impacts early childhood development.



Douglas Meggison has been engaged in social justice activism since his high school days. He has served on many boards and committees, including the Edmonton Public Library and the Capital Region United Way, and has been active in the Council of Canadians and the Edmonton Coalition Against War and Racism.

Doug has been working for a health care labour union since 1999. He joined the ESPC Board in 2005, becoming President in 2006. Doug lives in the Old Strathcona neighbourhood with his wife.

Continuing 2nd Term Candidates:



Ron MacLellan took a job at the Bissell Centre after moving to Edmonton from Fort McMurray in 2000. His experience there provided an invaluable, ground-level introduction to the myriad socio-political issues facing many of our city's less fortunate citizens.

Ron began working with low-income people through "Our Voice" street paper. He now works with the John Howard Society at Independence Apartments, and has recently begun work at Gunn Centre, a transitional housing facility for homeless men.



Joscelyn Proby has been working for the Edmonton Catholic School Board's kindergarten outreach team as a social worker since September 2006. Prior to this, she was with ABC Head Start for four years, where she served low-income families with preschool children.

Jocelyn emigrated from the UK in 1978 with a BSW from the London School of Economics. She also has a MA in Journalism, and was a journalist for 12 years in Saskatchewan, Toronto and Alberta before returning to social work.

2006 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- ◆ **Douglas Meggison (board president)**
- ◆ Terry Anderson (treasurer) (*pictured, right*)
- ◆ Larry Brockman
- ◆ Diane Dennis
- ◆ Ron MacLellan (chair person, nominating committee)
- ◆ Joscelyn Proby
- ◆ Ann Semotiuk
- ◆ Michael Sidra
- ◆ Alba Valderrama



STAFF

Susan Morrissey	Executive Director
John Kolkman	Research & Policy Analysis Coordinator
Anette Wickenheiser	Research & Communications Assistant
Stephanie Haar	Administrative Assistant

CONSULTANTS, STUDENTS & VOLUNTEERS

Jill Bulmer	Bookkeeper
Paul Dobrotvorsky	IT Services (Nu-Dawn Integrated Services)
Katie & Nathan Martin	Webmaster (Globalphobia Web Creations)
Tamara Guillarme	Library Sciences student (NAIT)
Stephanie Modeste	Social Work student (MacEwan College)
Jeremy Schiff	Volunteer Resource Room Assistant
Elizabeth Pringle	Volunteer Researcher: Working Poor Project

CORE FUNDERS

- ◆ United Way of the Alberta Capital Region
- ◆ Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission (ESPC Casino Fundraising Event)
- ◆ City of Edmonton Community Investment Grant

PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS OF PROJECTS

- ◆ Action for Healthy Communities (AHC)
- ◆ Alberta Social & Health Equity Network (ASHEN)
- ◆ Canadian Council for Social Development (CCSD)
- ◆ Edmonton Coalition on Housing and Homelessness (ECOHH)
- ◆ Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN)
- ◆ Inclusive Cities Canada (ICC)
- ◆ Grant MacEwan College Social Work Program
- ◆ Public Interest Alberta (PIA)
- ◆ Strategic Alliance on Low Income Issues
- ◆ United Way of the Alberta Capital Region
- ◆ Urban Core Support Network (UCSN)
- ◆ Vibrant Communities Edmonton (VCE)

MINUTES of 2006 AGM / May 23, 2006

1. Welcome and President's Remarks

The meeting was convened by Jenny Wong, President of the Edmonton Social Planning Council, who welcomed everyone and delivered a brief opening statement. Jenny welcomed special guest, David Eggen, MLA - Calder, as well as introduced her fellow ESPC Board of Directors.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Motion: to adopt the agenda

Moved: Kevan Rhead

Seconded: Ron MacLellan

CARRIED

3. Approval of Minutes of May 17th, 2005

Motion: to approve the Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on May 17th, 2005

Moved: Michael Austin

Seconded: Doug Meggison

CARRIED

4. President's Report

Jenny Wong reflected on the previous year and the accomplishments of the ESPC in 2005. Jenny pointed to the recent appearance of the ESPC paper *Creating Social and Health Equity: Adopting an Alberta Social Determinants of Health Framework* on the World Health Organization's website, indicating the broad audience the ESPC has begun to reach. The ESPC continues to be a voice for the people, advocating on their behalf.

Jenny recognized the efforts of current and previous ESPC staff, including Phil O'Hara, Dianne Henshaw and John Pater, in being key reasons as to why the ESPC was successful in the previous year, and who helped to lay the groundwork for current initiatives.

While in recent months the ESPC has undergone changes, Jenny eloquently stated that while change has been difficult, it is also necessary to grow and prosper. The future often holds unknown elements, but Jenny hopes that the Board and ESPC members will take an active part in the future of the organization.

5. Operational Report

Jenny Wong introduced Susan Morrissey, Executive Director, who delivered the operational report for the year 2005. Susan recently joined

MINUTES of 2006 AGM / May 23, 2006, cont'd...

the ESPC in October 2005, and spoke of how she was first struck over the diversity of the programs and issues that the ESPC dealt with. In terms of specific issues, Susan highlighted numerous ones:

- ◆ **Relocation in the fall 2006**

The ESPC will be moving offices this fall, relocating to a building close to its current location. Unfortunately, the move will no doubt change the face of the Sacred Heart Collective.

- ◆ **Strategic Alliance**

While there have been no policy changes as of yet, one must understand that such changes take time. However, the ESPC has influenced the Alberta Health and Wellness (AHW), speaking directly with AHW representatives who are looking at ways to change their procedural process.

The ESPC is also implementing its goal of reaching out to the community more, initiating contact with community groups and representatives, involving more individuals and groups in an attempt to better its network.

ESPC will be once again re-establishing its resource and archive room, a resource that was used in the past by many individuals in social policy. The popular publication Tracking the Trends will soon be published due to high demand.

Susan thanked the previous and present staff for their hard work in the past, and their continued commitment to the ESPC in the future. She also said a special thanks to the Board of Directors, stating that they have both challenged and educated her. As a result of the Board's work, the ESPC held a successful fundraising Casino.

6. Finance Committee Report

Michael Austin stated that the ESPC Board of Directors had received the financial report for the 2005 year. He then introduced Michael Epp to deliver the financial report.

7. Presentation of Financial Report

Michael Epp, of Hawkings Epp Dumont, reviewed the audited financial statements of the Council, reporting on behalf of the Board to the members, and on behalf of Trevor Dodd, who performed the on-site audit. The financial statements were reviewed by both the Finance Committee and the Board prior to this meeting.

Mr. Epp stated he was pleased with the audit results and process, stating that the ESPC is in good, solid financial position to carry out its duties. While the ESPC is not in the business of making money, its concern lies with fulfilling its mandate.

Although there was an operating deficit of \$9,000, the Council has accumulated \$91,000 in unrestricted surplus during its 66 years in operation, which is a solid financial resource to draw upon. Revenue and expenses decreased from the previous year, which Mr. Epp attributed to the fact that the Edmonton Centre for Equal Justice financials was no longer being included within the Council figures.

Mr. Epp presented numerous graphs that depicted the sources of revenue and expense for the Council, comparing the year's figures to previous years. Mr. Epp noted that overall there has been little change across categories, although an increase in revenue for advocacy occurred this year. Salaries continue to form the largest expense, which is typical for a non-profit organization.

Motion: to accept the 2005 Financial Report as circulated and reviewed
Moved: Jenny Wong
Seconded: Kevan Rhead
CARRIED

Motion: to appointment Hawkings Epp Dumont as the Auditor for the 2006 year
Moved: Jenny Wong
Seconded: Larry Brockman
CARRIED

8. Human Resource Nominating Committee Report

Joscelyn Proby reported that the Nominating Committee has held several meetings regarding future Board members, stating that there is continued interest from members of the general public to serve on the Board of Directors. Joscelyn then opened the floor for nominations. However, there were none at the time.

9. Recognition of Retiring Board Members

The only retiring Board member was Jenny Wong, whom Joscelyn Proby spoke about. Jenny served on the Board for four years, and stepped forward to become President during the summer. Jenny proved graceful under pressure during this challenging time, showing her leadership strength and determination to see the ESPC thrive once again.

MINUTES of 2006 AGM / May 23, 2006, cont'd...

On behalf of the other Board of Directors, the ESPC staff, and the ESPC membership, Joscelyn thanked Jenny for her hard work, wishing her and her fiancée all the best in their upcoming nuptials. Susan Morrissey presented Jenny with a token of appreciation.

10. Other Business

Douglas Meggison opened the floor for nominations once again. Due to vacancies, Doug asked for an open call for nominations. The ESPC policy is that there is to be 10-15 members on the Board, and now, due to circumstances, only 8 are currently serving. However, another policy states that the Board of Directors can continue to operate if the number of members happens to fall below the minimum. Joscelyn remarked that the Nominating Committee is currently holding interviews and will soon be appointing new Board members.

11. Adjournment

There being no further business, Jenny Wong adjourned the meeting.

NOTES

NOTES



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Visit our website @ www.edmspc.com

Ask about becoming an ESPC member, or

Make a donation on-line
through **Canadahelps.org**



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Member Agency

a member of the United Way
of the Alberta Capital Region