



2019 Burlington Food Bank,

Opening Remarks – Maria N. Thornton Chair

I had an entire report written up for our annual AGM. However, in light of the current Pandemic, (Covid-19), that is facing our city, refocus on our communication was in order.

Things are changing daily in our country, province and our great City of Burlington. And while we will touch on some of the great work achieved during our 2019 fiscal, I believe that it is more important to address the impact of COVID-19 on our services.

This year, our AGM is being held in accordance with the Social Distancing requirements. Utilizing today's technology, we are meeting over web services.

COVID-19 is changing our everyday lives. Things that we took for granted we are now remembering to cherish. What is

considered extreme measures by some, are considered a standard practice by others. One thing is for sure, our lives will change as an outcome from COVID-19, at least for the next year or so.

Over the past week we have been announcing changes to our processes and how we are dealing with the current “crisis”. Prior to the Premier’s Announcement on closing down Ontario to only essential services, the Board of Directors deemed that The Burlington Food Bank was an essential service to our community. Therefore, we made the decision to remain open for as long as possible. We are taking extra precautions to ensure that our staff and volunteers are as safe as possible. We have implemented protocols for clients to follow in order to be able to receive services safely from the Food Bank.

However, we are continually looking at alternatives which include; delivery or Pop-up. However, these alternatives are being organized knowing that we may have to alter future services further as additional Federal, Provincial or messages from the Mayor are announced.

One thing remains as a constant, we at the Burlington Food Bank are committed to servicing our community... with compassion and resilience.

Chair's Annual Report to the Community - March 26, 2020

I am happy to provide you all with an update on our 2019 fiscal and operations at the Burlington Food Bank. We are extremely proud of all our achievements this year. Here are some highlights from the past 12-months.

First, was being the first recipient of the new Mayor's Award for Community Service Awards for Not-For-Profit. It was an honour for us to be recognized for our dedication and compassion to our community who face food insecurity daily.

In May, we received notice that we had received notice our grant application which enabled us to purchase and acquire a walk-in freezer at our Plains Rd location. In addition, we thank the numerous corporate sponsors who donated funds or equipment, such as a new fridge (thank you Liebherr) and storage devices, enabling us to receive a more regular supply of perishable foods to supply to our community.

We are grateful to the strong relationships that we have in our community, such as the Gift of Giving Back, Burlington Fire Fighters, The Burlington Oldtimers Hockey and Bowser Babes

to name a few. Through our associates, we have received 10's of thousands in food and monetary donations that help keep us running strong in our community.

2019 saw an increase in Unique Users coming to the Food Bank. Unique meaning, the single count of a user. In other words, how many new users needed the services of the Food Bank.

We saw and served an additional 2,383 new individuals or families over 2018. What was more alarming was the number of families with children, 41% of the individuals we served were children which is substantially higher than the provincial average of 33%. Overall, we experienced an increase of 38.8% total people assisted in 2019 compared to 2018. It is also important to note that 43.5% of the households we assisted were families with children and that was a slight increase over 2018. Also, worth noting is that 44% of our clients' main source of income in 2019 was Social Assistance and that was down from 47% in 2018.

To assist with the increase usage, we respond with the following:

- We have increased and maintained our volunteer base of over 50 Volunteers.
- We hired a part-time staff to assist with the management of our volunteers and the increased need.
- We added Thursday nights to our hours of service to assist those in accessing the Food Bank.

Our Partners and Supporters

In 2019 our financial position continued to stay strong thanks to the generosity of our community donors and fundraisers.

- The Tim Horton's strong Smile Cookie campaign provided **\$73,779** to the Burlington Food Bank
- The Burlington Oldtimers Hockey Club and the Bowser Babes along with the Burlington Oldtimers Slo-Pitch League contributed over **\$21,000**
- The Burlington Dads group through their various events supported us with over **\$12, 000** in donations
- The Gift of Giving back, our largest food donor, provided us with approximately **25%** of the food and hygiene products they collected during their fall food drive
- Burlington Food Bank hosted the 3rd annual Ride to Provide

fundraiser which grossed a total of **\$72,000**

- Donations through our website increased with an improved interface developed by CanadaHelps we had **\$96, 241** in 2019 which was a substantial increase from our total of **\$65, 867** in 2018

We also received significant food and hygienic product support from, Walmart, Loblaws and Michael's No Frills

The Burlington Food Bank is indebted to these organizations along with several local churches, corporate organizations and private individuals who continue to help support the Food Bank by providing us with food and cash donations each year.

Our Team

The Executive Director, staff and volunteers continue their strong work ethic to assist the Food Bank in feeding the hungry in our community. Their hard work, compassion and creative ideas for client improvements are greatly appreciated by the board and the community. Each of these individuals help keep the lights on and their passion does not go unnoticed.

In addition to our regular volunteers we have been fortunate over the past year to have received volunteer help from the employees of many corporations and organizations who have

given up their time to come into the food bank to help sort and pack food.

The Burlington Food Bank continues to improve the customer experience in our community. I want to personally thank the staff, our volunteers, and the board, and all those who have helped our community address hunger in Burlington.

Sincerely,

Maria N. Thornton

Interim Chair, Burlington Food Bank

Feeding Burlington Since 1991

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