BOARD MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29TH, 2026

Board Present: Anda Dima, Bina Bilkhu, Jim Fallows, Josephine Brcic, Kofi Nkrumah-Young, Kate Nimegeers
Virtual: Maria McCullough
Regrets: Katherine Roy & Temi Adediji
Staff Present: Keith Karasin, Shelly Hill, Linda Zeng (present for 3.1 agenda items)

Call meeting to order at 5:13 p.m.

1.0 Agenda:

- **Land Acknowledge:**
  - Acknowledgement of Treaty Land read by Anda– I would like to begin by acknowledging that we are on the traditional lands, referred to as Treat 4 Territory and that the city of Regina is located on Treaty 4 territory, the original lands of the Cree, Ojibwe(OJIB-WE), Saulteaux (SO-TO), Dakota, Nakota, Lakota, and on the home land of the Metis Nation.

    We respect and honor the Treaties that were made on all territories, we acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past, and we are committed to move forward in partnership with Indigenous Nations in the spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

- **Adoption of the Agenda:**
  MOTION #38: NKRUMAH-YOUNG/BILKHU- adoption of the agenda as presented.

  CARRIED

- **Declaration of Conflict of Interest:**
  - None at this time.

2.0 Minutes:

- **Adoption of minutes – March 25th, 2026:**
  MOTION #39: BRCIC/NKRUMAH-YOUNG– adoption of March 25th, 2026 minutes as presented.

  CARRIED

- **Business Arising from Minutes:**
  - None at this time.

3.0 Accountabilities:

3.1. Stewardship:

- **Decision Item: Approval of 2026-27 Budget – Jim Fallows:**
  - The board discussed the 2026/27 budget with funding cuts from IRCC, including a 3% increase and 2% in-range move for remaining staff, resulting in a total 5% increase for most employees.
  - Updates to the budget as follows:

Revenue updates:

(,000)	FY26 Budget	FY25 Actual	FY26 BUD- FY25 BUD	
Revenue	11,305	11,639	-334	-3%
Wages	8,152	8,351	-179	-2%

Operation	3,231	3,098	113	4%
Total Expense	11,383	11,449	-66	-1%
Surplus/Deficit	-78	190	-268	-141%
Net Income %	-0.69%	1.63%	0	

Expense updates:

(,000)	FY26 Budget	FY25 Budget	FY25 BUD-FY24 BUD	
Revenue	11,305	11,639	-334	-2.9%
Wages	8,172	8,219	-47	-0.6%
Operation	3,211	3,341	-130	-3.9%
Total Expense	11,383	11,560	-177	-1.5%
Surplus/Deficit	-78	79	-157	-198%
Net Income %	-0.69%	0.68%		

- Following the discussion, the following motion was made:

<u>MOTION #40:</u> FALLOWS/BRCIC – motion that the Board approves 2026-2027 Budget with the above mentioned updates to revenue and expenses.

CARRIED

- **Decision Item: Use of Reserve Funds for 50th Anniversary Events – Jim Fallows:**
  - Discussed the use of reserves funds for the 50th Anniversary events which is not included in the budget. A $35,000 allocation for RODS' 50th anniversary celebration events was also approved, representing less than 1% of the organization's reserves.
  - Following the discussion, the following motion was made:

<u>MOTION #41:</u> FALLOWS/NIMEGEERS – motion that the Board approves a expenditure of up to $35,000 for events celebrating RODS 50th Anniversary.

CARRIED

- **Information Item: Bring Em Up Gala – Jim Fallows:**
  - Discussion regarding the upcoming gala in three weeks. Keith updated the board on changes to the gala event, explaining that RODS' role would be downplayed and the organization would receive 25% of net proceeds annually for youth recreation, with remaining funds supporting senior-level camp experiences. The board discussed whether to attend the upcoming gala in three weeks, discussed using reserves to fund board member attendance at approximately $190 per ticket. Josephine, Maria and Kate expressed interest in attending. Anda will attend if available. Keith will attend along with Communications team. The discussion concluded with a reminder that last year's event generated $10,000 in revenue for the organization. Discussed the use of reserve funds to cover board member attendance costs.

- **Decision Item: Use of Reserve Funds to Subsidize Health Care Cost of Newcomer Arrivals – Jim Fallows:**
  - Discussed a new healthcare cost policy for newcomers taking effect May 1st, which includes copays and prescription fees, and considered using the

$50,000 newcomer emergency reserve fund to address these costs, though there was confusion about the government's role in covering these expenses. The board discussed using the Newcomer Emergency Reserve to provide short-term support to government-assisted refugees with special healthcare needs. Keith explained that while IRCC had initially opposed the plan, they now allow the use of exceptional allowances for prescription copays and supplemental health costs, though a formal process is still being developed.

- The board approved the use of the reserve funds for this purpose, with annual reporting requirements to track spending and maintain accountability, please see following motion:

MOTION #42: **FALLOWSNKRUMAH-YOUNG –** motion that the Board approves the use of RODS' Newcomer Emergency Reserve to provide short-term support to government assisted refugees who fall under the "special IFH" category with respect to public health care coverage.

CARRIED

3.2. Strategic Direction and Monitoring:

- **ED Report (3-2-1 Format Re: Strategic Directions) – Keith Karasin:**
  - Spoke to report as circulated with key points as follows:
    - Keith reported that LINC agreements has been signed for three years, while settlements have been approved but not yet signed. He discussed budget challenges, noting that LINC can manage year-one cuts through staff reassignment, but future years will require staff layoffs. Keith also addressed facility concerns, explaining that Settlement programs will need to move out after this fiscal year due to budget constraints, and they are exploring options to either reduce rent costs or find alternative space within a few blocks radius.
    - Discussed challenges with service delivery due to dropping RAP numbers while maintaining high client needs, and highlighted the need to relocate IFH testing from the basement to Smith Street.
    - Keith has plans to meet with Lou and explore the former Stantec Engineering Building as a potential new location.
    - He also addressed current issues with daycare operators, the impact of Bill C-12 on claimants, and a special IRCC program that excludes major urban centers like Regina.
    - Expressed concern about negative media coverage and profiling of certain groups. Ongoing challenges with staff reporting incidents and micro-aggression, as well as concerns about a local sewer company's fundraising claims/community organizations/company will often run fundraiser naming RODS' as recipient then we will receive a cheque.
    - Updates on contract settlements and IRCC's decision to keep clients with the organization rather than transferring them due to caseload issues and waitlists.

  - **Risk Register Semi-Annual Presentation – Keith Karasin:**
    - The meeting also covered updates to the risk register, with AI being the only new element added, and plans to provide AI training to senior staff through Microsoft's championship mentorship program.
    - Discussed the organization's financial challenges and efforts to offset budget cuts through new services and external funding. Highlighted

the need for resources to develop a volunteer language program for low-level learners, mentioning plans to seek donor funding and explore new grant opportunities. Keith also addressed staff retention issues, noting the difficulty of maintaining morale due to upcoming layoffs and the need for team-building activities.

- Discussed several organizational updates and challenges. Mentioned that salary increases have helped retain staff, but ongoing uncertainty remains. The organization is waiting for a cybersecurity audit in June before proceeding with cloud migration, which will enhance security. Also, addressed public perception challenges, noting difficult attitudes in the community and limited resources for public campaigns, though the 50th anniversary celebration will be part of their outreach efforts. Regarding property assets, Keith reported that Smith Street has been taken off the market and discussed challenges with selling an old fleet vehicle. The conversation ended with a discussion about risk levels, where Keith explained that red-level risks (8-10) are largely out of their control, while yellow-level risks are being mitigated through measures like cameras and secure doors.
- Discussed the organization's approach to funding, noting they are seeking new grants and opportunities rather than investing their own money, particularly due to uncertainties around Smith Street which could involve up to $700,000 in repairs. Outlined several risks including changes to IRCC services and federal budget cuts, while also explaining the organization's careful approach to implementing AI tools, emphasizing the need for proper data protection and responsible usage. The conversation ended with a brief discussion about the risk register, which is reviewed by the board twice yearly, and plans for the board to potentially work more directly with risk management in the coming year.

- ***Action Item (Keith):***
  - Sign the MOU/letter with the gala organizers and send it to the board **Done prior to May board meeting.**
  - Follow up with BK on Friday regarding the gala arrangements and table/ticket details **Done prior to May board meeting.**
  - Meet with the building representative (in town this week or next) to discuss rent reduction for Smith Street **Pending**
  - Explore alternative rental locations within a few block radius if rent cannot be reduced **In Process**
  - Finalize plans for moving settlement operations out of second floor and basement by end of fiscal year **In Process**
  - Complete AI policy and training for staff **In Process**
  - Submit Mutahir's name to Microsoft AI championship mentorship program **Done prior to May board meeting.**
  - Apply for CN Rail and Home Depot funding for settlement **Done prior to May board meeting.**
  - Apply for federal security grant for building security features **Pending**
  - Explore new federal capital refurbishment program (up to $1.5 million) with Levi **RODS is not eligible**
  - Explore Build Canada's Strong Trade program partnership opportunity **Pending**
  - Explore CRM development funding opportunity **Pending**

- Contact donor through friend to fund volunteer language instruction coordinator position **Done prior to May board meeting.**
- Schedule meeting with Bob (engineer) to prioritize Smith Street building repairs **Pending**
- Keith: Provide annual report on Newcomer Emergency Reserve usage to Finance Committee in next month or two **Done prior to May board meeting.**
- Share AI policy with board member who requested it **Pending**

3.3. Governance:

- No items at this time.

3.4. ED Relationship:

- No items at this time.

3.5. Stakeholder and Strategic Alliances:

- No items at this time.

4.0 Committee Reports:

- **Executive Committee – Anda Dima:**
  - **Strategic Planning Committee Updates**:
    - The executive committee did not meet in the last month, but the Strategic Planning Committee provided updates that will be shared with the full board.
  - **ED Performance Review:**
    - The performance review cycle has been initiated with Keith, using a streamlined format.
  - **Succession Plan Policy update** – policy is completed with a few minor things to follow up on. Shelly has added that to the Governance Policy manual. Keith can implement this as he see fit. Anda will need to follow up with facilitator regarding payment for the service.
  - **Nominations Committee** – AGM is approaching and we need to look at whose terms are up. Anda announced that she would not be renewing her board term after 28 years, and the board needs to identify nominees for President and Vice-President positions for the upcoming AGM.

- ***Action item:*** Strategic Planning Committee to send updated strategic plan version to Shelly and Keith.

- **Finance Committee – Jim Fallows:**
  - The Finance Committee met multiple times this month and will have additional items to discuss in May. There was discussion about the World Refugee Day and anniversary event. Also, Jim noting a low response to applications for the Newcomer Bursary fund. Shelly mentioned that most will coming in closer to closing date of May 15th. Minutes will be sent to shelly to upload to portal.

- **Action Item:** Shelly remove the properties sub-committee line from agenda under Finance Committee.

- **Governance Committee – Katherine Roy:**
  - **Nominations Committee:** The group addressed the need to submit a slate of nominees for the board, with clarification that the 60-day requirement from the Constitution may not apply to board-submitted nominees.

- The board discussed upcoming elections and governance matters, with Anda and Temi confirming they would not continue in their positions after the AGM.
- Minutes will be sent to Shelly to upload to the board portal.

- ***Action Item:*** Nominations Committee (Josephine & Jim) to continue meeting with potential board members and finalize slate of nominees for May meeting. Confirm with all current board members whose terms are expiring whether they will run for re-election. Ensure president and vice president positions are staggered (one for one-year term, one for two-year term). Shelly to send reminder to remaining board member(s) to renew their membership by beginning of April 20.

- **Parent Advisory Committee:**
  - PAC meeting the past week. The board reviewed child care current staffing challenges, including some recent departures and new hires, as well as changes in clientele composition. They discussed policy adjustments needed for parent expectations and late pickup procedures, particularly regarding specific requests like tooth brushing. The meeting also covered child care facility updates, including decisions to become a ministry host site and renovations at the Smith Street location, with plans to involve parent volunteers in assembling purchased cabinets during the exhibition. For more details, please see minutes provided.

5.0 Review and Update Board Tracker (Motions & Action Items) – Anda Dima:

- No updates at this time.

5.0 New Business:

- No items at this time.

6.0 Standing IN CAMERA Session – Anda Dima:

- Meeting review: comments were positive; no suggestions for improvement were recorded.
  Ed Relationship: reviewed the process for the annual ED performance review.
  Child Care finances: updated the board on the special management presentation to the finance committee on April 8 and on the subsequent discussion that took place on April 15 at the regularly scheduled finance committee meeting.

7.0 Adjournment:

MOTION #43:
BILKHU/NKRUMAH-YOUNG/NIMEGEERS – the meeting be adjourned at 7:15 pm.
Next board meeting is Wednesday, May 27th, 2026 at 5:15 pm.

CARRIED