From: Fort Frances Volunteer Bureau
To: Dawn Galusha
Subject: [External] Re: Charity Rebate Application
Date: Thursday, January 7, 2021 9:31:26 AM

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Hello Dawn,

The Fort Frances Volunteer Bureau (FFVB) is a registered non-profit charity involved in the recruitment, training, and/or organization of volunteers, volunteer groups, service clubs, and social programs dedicated to providing services and goods to the less fortunate people of our community, not only financially but mentally and socially as well. The FFVB facilitates this in a number of different ways:

(i) We absorb existing programs operated by volunteers or volunteer groups. The Family Centre is an example of this. The Family Centre was a drop-in centre, independently run by a small group of volunteers, that originally rented space from two other locations in Fort Frances before finally renting a spot from the FFVB in the spring of 2019. The board members of the FFVB were very impressed with the charity work that the Family Centre was doing. At a board meeting in March 2020, a motion was made proposing that the FFVB absorb the Family Centre, meaning its program and volunteers, and make the Family Centre a program of the FFVB and its volunteers members of the FFVB. The board of the FFVB unanimously passed the motion reasoning that the charity work performed by the Family Centre and its volunteers complimented the FFVB'S mandate and was a perfect program to emphasize the FFVB's commitment to improving the lives of people living in our community. Before implementation of the motion, the CRA was consulted to ensure that no regulations, pertaining to the operation of registered non-profit charities, were violated. Once no wrongdoing was confirmed by the CRA and the Family Centre volunteers agreed with the proposal, the Family Centre became a charitable program run by FFVB. The Family Centre program and the volunteers that work at the centre operate under the direction of the FFVB board, are controlled by the by-laws and policies of the FFVB, and are insured under the FFVB's liability insurance policy.

(ii) We partner with service clubs. The Voyageur Lions Club has been an ardent supporter of the FFVB and the Family Centre. They have helped fund the food bank, have a member on the FFVB board named Gabby Hanzuk (2020 Fort Frances Citizen of the Year), and have many Lions members that are key volunteers at the Family Centre program.

(iii) We partner with religious organizations. The Catholic Women's League, the New Beginnings Church with their Loaves and Fishes kitchen, and the Church of the Holy Spirit have all contributed food, money, and volunteer hours to help the Family Centre. The 2019 citizen of the year, Joy Lockman, is instrumental in coordinating food distribution between her Loaves and Fishes program and the volunteers of the Family Centre program to ensure no food goes wasted.

(iv) We partner with health services. In November and December, nurse practitioners from the Fort Frances Family Health Team used office space at the FFVB's building to run weekly satellite health clinics for the poor and the homeless. These clinics are expected to continue in 2021. The Northwestern Public Health Unit (NWPHU) used office space at the FFVB building to run flu vaccination clinics. The NWPHU has provided thousands of dollars to the FFVB to help fund our food bank and to aid in the construction of a shower room and laundry facilities. They have also provided socks, underwear, hats, and gloves to our clothing bank. The soup given out daily at the Family Centre is supplied by Riverside Healthcare who also gives regular donations of other various types of surplus food to help us feed people and prevent malnutrition.

(v) We partner with mental health. On a daily basis during the week, a mobile crisis unit consisting of mental health worker Kristie Cousineau and an OPP officer, usually Melinda Mills, come to the FFVB building to offer services to the people who frequent the Family Centre program.

(vi) We partner with police organizations. In addition to the OPP officers mentioned above, other police officers come to the Family Centre regularly to help volunteers deal with difficult patrons. As well, officers of both the OPP and Treaty Three, regularly bring people wandering the streets with no place to go to the Family Centre for food and shelter. Chief Kai Liu and some of the officers of the Treaty Three Police are supporters of the FFVB and the Family Centre program. The FFVB and Treaty Three are working on locating an indigenous women's crisis social worker in an office in the FFVB building and hope to have that in place in early 2021.

(vii) We partner with legal services. On numerous occasions, attorneys have used the FFVB building and the Family Centre program as a place to send clients being released from jail. The Family Centre has also been used as a place for people sentenced to community hours to do their service work.

(viii) We partner with social services. On several occasions, offices at the FFVB building have been used as a meeting place for supervised visits between mother and child under the supervision of a court ordered social worker. The closing of offices and reduction in social services due to the pandemic response has necessitated alternate locations and arrangements be made to facilitate such visits.

(ix) We partner with other charities. The Salvation Army distributes surplus food and clothing through the Family Centre program. Being open seven days a week and the large number of poor people that frequent the centre makes it an excellent choice to ensure distribution of these surplus items.

(x) We partner with other organizations. The Bear Clan has an office situated in the FFVB building and runs its operations from there. Bear Clan volunteers also help out at the Family Centre.

Facilitating the above listed ten items, as well as the storage requirements needed to operate a food bank, a clothing bank, a bedding bank, and a soup kitchen uses up 70% of the FFVB's building. The FFVB tries to rent out the remaining 30% of the building to generate a revenue stream to cover the building's expenses, i.e., utilities, taxes, minor repairs, and maintenance.

Moving forward, it is the intention of the board of the FFVB to continue finding ways to facilitate as many social programs as possible to help the ever growing number of people falling through the social system's cracks. This population is composed of desperate and helpless mentally ill people who can not, or will not, conform to the behavioural requirements demanded of them as a prerequisite to access essential social services provided by RRDSSAB and many First Nations programs. I have two health related university degrees and have worked 35 years as a retail pharmacist, in many different communities throughout Northwestern Ontario, and over my entire career I have had to deal with mentally ill patients and addiction. I have helped create and operate both methadone and suboxone clinics in Fort Frances, Atikokan, Emo, and Thunder Bay. Mental illness and addiction go hand in hand, they are not a new problem, and this problem is growing exponentially. Our health and social systems have failed this group of people and the FFVB is committed to help this broken segment of our society through partnerships with like minded individuals and organizations who are prepared to abandon the ineffective social conventions of the status quo and work towards creating a more effective and inclusive solution.

As with many small non-profit organizations, the history, mandates, and letters patent are commonly neglected and regular updates are not completed. The FFVB is no exception. The board of the FFVB has addressed this issue and the necessary updates are being processed by our lawyer. We expect this process to be completed by the end of February at the latest. Once completed I will email them to you.

I hope this clarifies any confusion as to the mandate of the FFVB, the charitable work the FFVB does, and to the role the Family Centre program plays facilitating both the FFVB's mandate and the charitable work it does.

John Sus
Artsci'83 Queens, BPharm'86 U of Manitoba
FFVB Director/Treasurer
FFVB member and volunteer

On Wed., Jan. 6, 2021, 12:16 p.m. Dawn Galusha, <dgalusha@fortfrances.ca> wrote:

> Good Afternoon John,
>
> The Charity Rebate Application was discussed yesterday at the Administration and Finance Executive Committee. From the application, it is unclear what the Fort Frances Volunteer Bureau is currently involved with. It appears that 30% of the Building is a rental area and the other 70% is used be the FFVB. We realize that the Fort Frances Family Centre is located at the Volunteer Bureau, but it is my understanding that it is separate from the "FFVB". Please confirm.
>
> There is a "History of the FFVB" last updated April 1991 in the package. The Committee would like an updated written outline of what the Fort Frances Volunteer Bureau is currently working on, as this document is very outdated. Please send this to me at your earliest convenience.

Regards,

Dawn

Dawn Galusha, CPA, CGA

Treasurer

Town of Fort Frances

807-274-5323 Ext 1225