

2017 Chair, Board of Directors Report

Heron Emergency Food Centre provides an emergency 3-day supply of food. But what does that mean?

In 2017, food was provided to 3,997 individuals within 1,298 households. Including repeated requests, we served 20,912 people. Yet, according to our by-laws, Heron Emergency Food Centre's objective is to provide food to ease the financial burden of those residents of Southeast Ottawa who are unable due to poverty to purchase a sufficient supply of groceries for themselves. We can only measure the success in easing our clients' financial burdens by the feedback we receive from our clients. One such feedback is as follows:

"Thank you for your kindness. I never imagined I would have to rely on a food bank. My heart is full of gratitude to those who keep this wonderful resource going. Your generosity is a life saver. Thank you for helping me out in times of need. HEFC has eased my anxiety about making ends meet. It's not easy taking care of bills in a timely fashion. I don't have the words to tell you how I appreciate each of you and the work you do. The stigma of being in need is made more bearable when you have people who truly care."

To meet our mandate in 2017, Heron Emergency Food Centre distributed \$690,400 worth of food, \$607,368 of which was provided by the Ottawa Food Bank, \$25,709 was received from within the community and \$57,323 was purchased.

Heron Emergency Food Centre met its mandate with the assistance of so many people. As mentioned above, the Ottawa Food Bank has increased their supply of produce through their Refresh and Community Harvest programs; this in turn has helped us decrease our spending on fresh produce. In order to ensure our food package is nutritiously balanced, we need to purchase food; to this end, the financial assistance of area churches, organisations and residents is of vital importance. The City of Ottawa continues to provide a yearly grant, the amount of which helps pay the salary of our Executive Coordinator and cover administrative costs. The City of Ottawa also provides us our current location rent free. Finally, we could not meet our mandate without our 80 volunteers who worked 6,580 hours serving our neighbours with dedication and courtesy.

Financially, like last year, we had a surplus: \$12,052. As Heron Emergency Food Centre is a not-for-profit organisation, the Board of Directors has committed to spending this money in 2018 by improving the content of the food package.

A new partnership with Giant Tiger on Walkley Road now enables us to provide more frozen meat. Giant Tiger freezes any un-sold meat that has reached the best before date and then donates it to us. Clients have expressed much appreciation over this boon. Also new at Heron Emergency Food Centre is the implementation of a code of conduct to better protect all people coming to the food bank.

Finally, as I step down from the Board of Directors, I would like to express my appreciation to the following: to the volunteers; to Louisa Simms, our dedicated and efficient Executive Coordinator; to Harold Black, our Buyer, and to the Directors of the Board for their support and contributions. I would like to recognise Andrew Louis, Brendan Reid and Gwen Bell who have decided to step down from the Board of Directors. Thank you all for the opportunity to serve my community.

Respectfully submitted,

Nic Larouche

Chair, Board of Directors
Heron Emergency Food Centre