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CNOY 2022 – sign up now



A Quarterly Insight into Grind Operations

Fall 2021

coffee break

From the editor >>>

Welcome to the Grind's second newsletter

Welcome to the second issue of Coffee Break, a newsletter to help keep our community informed about activities and services offered by The Grind Pembroke from its facilities in Pembroke, Ontario.

We had good intentions of issuing this newsletter on a quarterly basis. But alas, issues beyond our control gave us little time to accomplish this "nice to do" task. Instead, we focussed most of our resources on a much higher priority –moving to a new location to gain more space for program, while trying to maintain key services to our clients as they struggled to cope with the added stresses caused by the pandemic.

But so far we've succeeded as story items in this issue will attest. Our success would not have been possible without the continuing strong support of our community donors and volunteers, the forbearance of our clients and the awesome government grants we received.

Grind changes location! City of Pembroke to the rescue!

Facing the end of its lease at its downtown Pembroke operational headquarters, combined with growing opposition to its continued presence on Pembroke's principal business street and the lack of space for a proper kitchen in which to prepare meals to satisfy a growing client need for prepared meals, the Grind Pembroke, with the help of a faith-based community committee, embarked on a year-long search in 2020 for an alternate location. Toward the end of that year, the City of Pembroke Council stepped up to the plate to offer a five-year lease on its decommissioned fire hall located behind Victoria Hall at the south end of Victoria Street.

Grind board members, after studying the site's potential for several months, decided to accept the offer. After taking possession of the building in June of 2020, a rough building floor plan was

prepared leading to an evaluation of infrastructure needs. This activity led ultimately to approved engineering drawings and a city building permit that would guide subsequent required renovations.

Because of the size, complexity and cost of the project, it was decided to undertake renovations in four phases based on client and program priorities. Following completion of upgrades to the building's electrical, plumbing and HVAC systems, actual construction in converting the structure into program useable space began in 2020 November.

... /2



Location change con't >>>

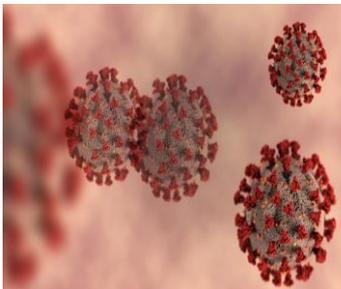
Phase 1 of the renovations project was completed in 2021 September, allowing The Grind to resume service delivery in three key areas once a city occupancy permit was obtained in 2021 September. First was a Community Kitchen to support the preparation of on-site meals to satisfy a growing demand for nutritious food among the area's marginalized and at-risk population. This service had been temporarily delivered from the kitchen of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul at St. Columbskille Cathedral following The Grind's move from downtown. Secondly, was completion of the Client Services Office, including reception and consultation space. Thirdly, space, that will ultimately serve as additional client service consultation space, was completed to temporarily house the organization's administrative, financial and volunteer recruitment activities. Existing washrooms were also upgraded for staff and volunteer use.

Phase 2 renovations got underway in 2021 October to provide public washrooms, including a single-

occupant accessible washroom, interior and exterior accessible doors, a shower/change room, a janitor's closet, and a client lounge that will be part of the Client Services Office suite. This phase is expected to be completed by 2022 January.

Phase 3 renovations, expected to commence sometime in early 2022 once funding is confirmed, will eventually allow The Grind to re-open its signature Coffee House when COVID health regulations permit in-door service to resume. Currently, meals prepared by the Community Kitchen are provided to clients on a take-out basis only.

Phase 4, for which funding is not yet identified, will include space for The Grind's food security operations involving food inspection and safe storage, as well as a market where clients can obtain fresh food and emergency food boxes to tide them over when community food banks are closed.



COVID 19 – our response in helping clients cope !

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has been hard on every community member – but especially so for our marginalized, at-risk population, including the many homeless we have strived to help in partnership with health and social service agencies. (read more - p. 4)

Key to renovations project >>>



Government capital grants to the rescue

The Grind Pembroke has been blessed with generous community donors from the day it opened its Coffee House in 2015 October. Contributions of money, gifts-in-kind and labour from individuals, organizations, churches and businesses have allowed the doors to remain open and the services to at-risk community members to continue unabated over the intervening six years.

However, once the writing was on the wall pointing to the need for the operations to move location, it was clear that donor support would



**Ontario
Trillium
Foundation**

be insufficient to cover the high renovations' costs – estimated to be about \$700,000. Thus an ambitious government grant application process was undertaken. This effort has so far been successful. At the end of 2020 December, The Grind received word that its application to the Ontario Trillium Foundation's 2020 Resilient Communities

The Grind's Client Services Office – focusing on basic needs and system navigation

The Grind Pembroke created its first Client Services Office in 2017. The impetus for setting up this service was to deal with an increasing number of clients coming through the Coffee House doors requiring more than a free cup of coffee and a place to relax.

In those early days, volunteers manning the Grind's



The Grind's new Client Services Office now open.

Coffee House were ill-equipped to respond to increasingly complex social and health issues presented by clients. In addition to the need for more qualified and dedicated personnel to address these issues, there was urgency in acquiring separate space that could provide clients with a more confidential and calming environment. An opportunity to lease a vacant office storefront adjacent to the Coffee House was an ideal solution. Clients needing someone to hear their

story could be referred to the office for help in meeting their basic needs as well as the option of getting more in-depth assistance with issues that were causing stress in their lives.

Like its predecessor, The Grind's recently opened Client Services Office at its new fire hall location relies on the help of 2nd year Social Service Worker (SSW) students serving their community placement requirements and an SSW graduate. Backing up this complement of volunteers are embedded members of Mental Health Services of Renfrew County's Crisis Team.

The Grind's Client Services Office does not have resources to provide client counselling or case management. Rather, its focus is on providing information and system navigation – that is, ensuring that clients are referred to appropriate provincially funded and mandated health and social service agencies.



Food facts

Our new Community Kitchen, under the able leadership of Cook Leann Rollins, aided by her cadre of loyal volunteers, worked exhaustively to provide nutritious meals to our clients during the COVID period. A whopping 31,442 take-out lunches were provided over the sixteen month period between 2020 July and 2021 October. Congratulations to all!

Renovation grants *con't from p.3*

... Fund had been approved for \$150,000. This contribution, combined with over \$140,000 in community donations, was sufficient to start and complete Phase 1 of the fire hall renovations project (see p. 2 article).

Subsequent funding applications to the federal department of Employment & Social Development Canada's Enabling Accessibility Fund and their Reaching Home Capital Grant enabled construction to begin on Phase 2 renovations – currently in progress (see p. 2 article).

Phase 3 of the renovations' project – to re-create The Grind's signature Coffee House is pending application to the Ontario Trillium Foundation's 2021 Resilient Communities Fund for further funding support.

Phase 4 renovations are pending identification of a funding source.



Grind staff & volunteers worked tirelessly during COVID-19 to serve our at-risk community members, often at risk to themselves. Kudos to all from The Grind Board.



Response to COVID-19

mobilizing resources to meet growing client food needs

Like those in all communities around Canada and the globe, the rapid spread and devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted residents of Renfrew County in various ways. Especially hard hit have been the most vulnerable of our community members, especially the homeless.

By mobilizing community resources, combined with an infusion of generous government relief funding and good old fashioned resiliency and a “can-do” attitude, many community-based organizations like The Grind Pembroke have been able to weather the storm to continue helping those in need.

When necessary health measures forced the closure of The Grind’s Coffee House to indoor dining in early 2020, steps were quickly

taken to set up a food take-out service and limited client services operation from the front entrance. COVID relief funding from several sources during 2020 and 2021 made it possible for The Grind meet a growing need for food and other direct services to clients. Community donations assisted in keeping the doors open in terms of space operational costs, but this wasn’t enough to satisfy the hunger of an ever-increasing number of people.

Government and institutional COVID relief funding filled the gap over a two-year period (2020 to 2021), including from the following sources:

The Provincial Government, through the County of Renfrew, provided \$129,728. The last of these funds will be spent by 2021 December 31. The Federal Government, through the Reaching Home Fund via United Way Simcoe Muskoka, and Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada’s Emergency Food Security Fund via Community Food Centres



Canada provided \$65,741. These funds were exhausted by 2021 May 31. The United Way East Ontario provided \$10,000 and Walmart Global Donation Management provided \$1,000. Relief funding from these sources totalled an amazing \$206,469.

These funds allowed the purchase of food, the lease and operation of a van, including insurance, to secure and deliver food, for wages for three people to assist with the food security program, to conduct wellness checks of the homeless living on the street, and the operation of an After-hours Crisis line to assist the homeless in securing emergency motel shelter.

The Grind thanks all those who contributed.

Food on the go >>>

Take-out meals provided by The Grind during the COVID period to date, either from our temporary kitchen at St. Columbskill Cathedral prior the move to our new location and then from our new Community Kitchen on Victoria Street, weren’t the only contributions to client nutritional needs. Over 8,600 meals were delivered by Food Security staff, Adrienne Campbell and Tanner Barnes, to clients who were sick at home or immuno-compromised, and those who were homeless and in emergency shelter at local motels. As well, to supplement food available from local food banks, staff provided clients and families in need with 347 food boxes. Great job guys!



Join in the Fun!

**Support The Grind’s
Efforts to Help Those At-Risk in
our Community
Saturday, 2022 Feb. 26**

**Register On-Line
cnoy.org/location/pembroke**

coming in 2022 >>>

In The Next Issue

*CNOY 2022 fundraising results
Facility renovations - update
Food Security – Grind’s plans to
provide additional client support
. . . and more*

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