

Chebucto Community Net Society

Annual General Meeting 2017

Report from the Chair of the Board of Directors 2017/18

Hello to members and visitors. It is an honour to be here at the Joseph Howe manor for this year's Annual General Meeting.

The months of 2017 seem to have flown by the board in its entirety but we seem to have weathered the worst of what was thrown at us with what I am very proud to say is almost bare-knuckled cyber bull-riding skills.

That was the joke I was going to start with. Here is what happened: In March 2017 with the departure of Mr. A. Wright (a very strong and singular presence in CCN for close to 17 years) from his position within a 24 hour period; the board had to re-evaluate, re-address, re-consider many of the initiatives resulting from this unexpected departure and indeed from the history of Mr. Wright's involvement with CCN. The membership present at the 2017 AGM suggested that the board consider an extended association of an agreeable nature with Mr. Wright. This board unanimously voted against any further association with Mr. Wright in April of 2017 very shortly after the AGM on the 19th.

The following months have seen a group of hard working volunteers: Tech enthusiasts and a few of us grunts get together on an almost daily basis to learn how to run the network without breaking it, and keep our members happy without too much of a personal life compromise. We fitted CCN into our lives like an abandoned pet; we have nurtured it, cleaned it up, reintroduced it to its neighbors, tended its wounds, bought newer necessities for it, and finally found it some new friends.

Last year I reported that we were very close to being self-sufficient again, based on the strength of the membership fees alone. This does not mean that we would refuse any generosity you may feel in your donations or services. This year you will notice that we are in a stronger financial position, than we have been in recently, in fact since I joined the board back in 2007. That will be in the financial report. On the technical side we have had many difficulties but also many ... in fact very many more successes that will be addressed in the technical report.

Last year I also promised a continued social media presence and advocacy for public access to affordable internet. Those of you who were familiar with Mr. Wright's handling of the society's social media accounts were right not to expect a continuation of the stylistic approach in the same vein as was presented previously. So in keeping with our decision to distance CCN from any further association with the past we opted (without too much discussion) a lower key presence and advocacy on the social media. And to be frank none of the volunteers had enough energy left to brag about our accomplishments at every turn ... or take pictures and post on Twitter every time we reached and passed a milestone as an organization or even as a group of volunteers.

It became necessary to seek legal advice during the Summer months and that led to discussions and negotiations with Bacchus & Associates Law Firm whom, we on the board, think might be good friends to have in legal places. In October they helped us with a tailored contract to hire an office assistant and volunteer tech service with someone. One of our longtime supporters and tech service expert and friendly volunteers in the person of Reg Hody was the successful applicant. Why did we not advertise this position? Well we take your privacy very

seriously and the person in that position has been vetted and thoroughly trusted ... this is not something we can do with an outsider coming in trying to fill that position within a 7 month period.

Last year I reported to you my hopes of further interactions with the academic stream, and that has been where they were left mostly because we were busy with everything else. Dr. Zincir-Heywood, with whom we have established previous cooperation, was on sabbatical leave and it seemed less stressful for all the volunteers not have to do everything and then be involved in an academic project as well. You may be happy to hear that I personally attended an ACORN (Atlantic Canada Organization of Research Networks) conference in partnership with National Research and Education Network (CANARIE) in October of 2017. We are an affiliate member. There were university staff and presenters from across Nova Scotia. Participants and presenters attended by Skype over the same network. Issues discussed ranged from academic access to academic content to matriculation over the internet to security and identity establishment.

The lament of one presenter was how far behind Europe Canada is in so far as internet access and cost per capita is concerned. My comments on how the users': Access to the network and identity security are the things CCN has been involved in since its inception were made to the group in general.

Our partners in Metro housing, Dalhousie, ACORN, and EastLink have helped us maintain a significantly more noteworthy presence amongst the ISP's in the Atlantic region ... if it was thought that CCN is represented by any one group this IS that group. We were expected to

fail by some within a very short time ... I am here to tell you that it is not true by a very very long shot.

As usual we would welcome your direct involvement in helping us achieve our organization's goals be it in volunteer service or donations.

Shahab Rowshan
Chair
Board of Directors
Chebucto Community Net Society