



# 2006 AGM resolutions

## Summary of action taken and directions proposed

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### **1. Affordable housing** **Submitted by: Board of Directors** **AGM Action: Adopted**

This resolution proposed a set of objectives for CHF Canada's federal advocacy efforts.

Since the annual meeting, much has changed in Canada's political landscape – most importantly, in January 2007 we saw the election of a Conservative minority government. CHF Canada members worked hard during the election campaign and were successful in having specific references to co-operative housing included in all federal party platforms except the Conservatives'.

After the election, along with other housing advocacy groups, we lobbied the government to continue with the funding commitments made by the previous Liberal government (\$1.4 billion for new affordable housing). This effort was successful. The funding was protected in a set of housing trust funds that provinces and territories can use.

On Parliament Hill and in their ridings, we contacted newly-elected federal Conservative MPs. We participated in several “partnered” lobby efforts with the Canadian Co-operative Association, the National Coalition on Housing and Homelessness, and with the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association. We attended various consultations related to new affordable housing.

At the time of writing (April 2007), CHF Canada and its regional partners are well prepared for a federal election. Our election platform is contained in the resolution on affordable housing that has been proposed by the board for members' consideration at the 2007 annual meeting.

**2. Fairness for Section 95 housing co-operatives**  
**Submitted by: Board of Directors and Cardiff Housing Co-operative (Toronto, ON)**  
**AGM Action: Adopted**

At CHF Canada's 2005 annual meeting in Edmonton, then-Minister Joe Fontana announced a welcome change to the Section 95 program formula and told us that a new formula would be used for mortgages that renewed after January 2005. He also said that additional funding could be made available through CMHC's "existing tools" to assist co-ops in financial difficulty.

Along with other national and regional housing stakeholders we will be asking the federal government not to reduce its housing spending as its current commitments draw to a close and instead rededicate these funds to the continuing affordable housing needs of Canadians.

This new formula has been helpful to co-ops that have renewed their mortgages since 2005, and at least one co-op has been helped with special financial aid. CHF Canada has publicized this, and encouraged co-ops facing financial difficulty because of reduced rent-geared-to-income (RGI) subsidies to seek special assistance by contacting the Agency for Co-operative Housing.

Last year's resolution called on members to continue to press the federal government to apply the 2005 program funding changes ("dollar for dollar" matching of mortgage payment and RGI subsidy reductions) to all Section 95 co-ops without delay and to lobby for additional funds so that co-ops could provide more rent-geared-to-income housing.

After the annual meeting, we made progress toward these goals. Just before the federal election was called, we were reasonably confident that additional funding would be made available to Section 95 housing co-operatives that needed it. However, the election result provided little optimism, and we recognized that the backward mapping of the "dollar for dollar" formula change was no longer a realistic objective. We saw little likelihood in general that the federal government would provide more funding directly to Section 95 co-ops.

Accordingly, we began to pursue other options to assist these co-ops. As noted above, one co-op in Toronto had received additional funding in special circumstances, so we publicized this among our members – Section 95 co-ops in financial difficulty were encouraged to pursue this assistance by contacting the Agency.

In February, we helped launch a Toronto-based joint CHFT-CHF Canada lobbying campaign to seek additional subsidies – not just for Section 95 co-ops, but for all federal co-ops that might want to increase the number of rent-geared-to-income households in their memberships. We know that, soon enough, these co-ops' operating agreements will expire and that many co-ops will need new RGI subsidies so that they can continue to provide affordable housing to their members and others.

For the next several years, we expect that the campaign for replacement subsidies will be one of the most significant strategic issues that CHF Canada members will face in their relationship with governments. It is a key element in our 2007 federal election campaign and is part of a resolution to be presented by the Board of Directors to members during the 2007 annual meeting.

**3. 2020 Vision Project**  
**Submitted by: Board of Directors**  
**AGM Action: Adopted**

This resolution endorses the 2020 Vision Project. The purpose of the project is to help housing co-operatives prepare for the future. The resolution encourages housing co-ops to become 2020 co-ops and supports the development of a toolkit of resources to help co-ops achieve the 2020 co-op designation.

Work on 2020 has kicked into high gear. Information and tools to assist co-ops will be developed over a number of years. In 2007, our priorities will include:

- completing the 2020 compass;
- completing long-term financial planning software;
- distributing guides on governance, management and co-op principles;
- producing a guide on investment planning; and
- producing a guide about making 2020 a reality for co-ops.

**4. Protecting seniors housing**  
**Submitted by: West Heritage Manor Housing Co-operative (Calgary, AB)**  
**AGM Action: Adopted**

This resolution directs CHF Canada to develop a model overhousing by-law that supports security of tenure for co-op members, especially for seniors and other small households. It asks CHF Canada to continue its efforts to persuade provincial and municipal housing departments and corporations to adopt a flexible approach to occupancy standards and to promote a philosophy of member involvement that works for seniors.

The development of a model overhousing by-law is included in the 2007 operating plan. We will continue to find opportunities to work to achieve flexibility in government rules for occupancy standards. In late 2006, the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing announced draft possible changes to the *Social Housing Reform Act* which included eliminating the right of municipalities to set more restrictive occupancy standards and allowing co-ops more flexibility in dealing with minimally over-housed households. We are also updating our information on provincial and municipal occupancy standards.

**5. Education materials for major capital spending projects**  
**Submitted by: Beaver Creek Housing Co-operative (Waterloo, ON)**  
**AGM Action: Adopted**

This resolution asks CHF Canada to develop educational materials to help co-ops improve and strengthen the process and tools they use to carry out repairs and improvements.

Plans to provide the educational materials are included in the 2007 operating plan. Work on this project will be co-ordinated and integrated with the 2020 Vision workplan.

This includes revising CHF Canada's capital replacement guide, repackaging capital planning resources, compiling information on industry standard contract documents and a maintenance guide outlining the process for carrying out major repairs.

**6. Qualifications for federation membership in CHF Canada**  
**Submitted by: Board of Directors**  
**AGM Action: Adopted**

This resolution directed CHF Canada to apply higher standards related to representation of local co-ops in its by-laws, for membership by federations. The by-law amendments to implement this resolution were reviewed by the board at its March 2007 meeting and will be presented to members at the 2007 annual meeting (Resolution #1).

## **LATE RESOLUTIONS**

**L1. 2007 Annual General Meeting**  
**Submitted by: Hugh Garner Housing Co-operative (Toronto, ON)**  
**AGM Action: Referred to the Board of Directors, and adopted**

This resolution asked CHF Canada to adopt a theme of environmental sustainability at the 2007 AGM.

We arranged with The Natural Step Canada (TNS) to assist us in the range of activities suggested in this resolution and struck a member-based task force to work with TNS in the development of a decision-making tool that co-ops can use to assess the environmental impact of their decisions. This tool will be presented during a workshop to be held at the 2007 annual meeting.

Our staff received training in this field during a planning session held in late September 2006.

This year's annual meeting reflects the theme of environmental sustainability in several ways. As well as workshops and presentations, our keynote speaker is Ms Kelly Baxter, Executive Director of The Natural Step Canada. Several member co-ops will attend the annual meeting to showcase their initiatives on environmental sustainability. There will be a special consultation on sustainability during the business meeting portion of the AGM.

Since last year's meeting, our national and Ontario *Newsbriefs* have featured environmental sustainability, and the spring 2007 *Newsbriefs* contained a special supplement.

We will be presenting a "green" annual meeting, with environmentally friendly meeting materials.

**L2. Safety systems for people who are deaf or hard of hearing**  
**Submitted by: Cole Road Housing Co-operative (Guelph, ON)**  
**AGM Action: Referred to the Board of Directors, and adopted**

This resolution asks CHF Canada to make available information on visual fire alarms and to promote their use wherever possible.

An article with information about fire safety, including the use of visual alarms, was featured in the March 2007 edition of *Newsbriefs*.

**L3. Remaining in our co-ops**  
**Submitted by: Windward Co-op Homes and Charles Hastings Housing Co-op (Toronto, ON)**  
**AGM Action: Referred to the Board of Directors, and adopted**

This resolution confirms CHF Canada's support of the principle of aging in place. The resolution directs CHF Canada to profile best practices that support residents to age in place and to call on government to develop programs and services that help aging members remain in their co-op communities.

Following the 2006 annual meeting, a small working group of seniors including the resolution's sponsors was formed to review our workplan in support of this resolution. A seniors' webpage is being created for the CHF Canada website which will be an ongoing resource for information and activities that support aging in place. Members of the working group have undertaken to identify some best practices that can be shared with our members.