

**1999 ONTARIO REGION  
ANNUAL MEETING RESOLUTIONS**

**Jun 1999**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

### **1999 Ontario Region Resolutions**

- R1a Voting for the Northern Ontario Council Member
- R1b Close of Nominations for Northern Ontario Council Member
- R1c Notice of Meeting to Elect Northern Ontario Council Member
- R1d Co-op Residency Requirement for Northern Ontario Council Member
- R2 Getting Ontario Back into the Housing Business

### **Late Resolutions**

- LR 1 Campaign with MPs on Social Housing Reform
- LR 2 New Rent Supplement Agreements for Federal Co-ops
- LR 3 Support for Federal Campaign Outside Ontario

## **RESOLUTION # R1a**

Raiffeisen Co-operative Homes

### **Voting for the Northern Ontario Council Member**

#### **WE RESOLVE:**

1. **THAT** the Ontario Region Operating Rules be amended by adding the following after the words “annual meeting” at the end of the second sentence of paragraph 4.3(e):

in conjunction with a meeting of the local federation, if one is being held at the relevant time

2. **AND THAT** the Ontario Region Operating Rules be amended by adding the following after paragraph 4.3 (e):

Each Member from Northern Ontario will be entitled to vote either:

- i. by submitting a ballot at the meeting, or
- ii. by faxing a ballot to the office of CHF Canada’s auditor.

The Ontario Council will pass a resolution setting out procedures relating to faxing ballots. The procedures will set a deadline for receiving the ballots, which will be by 5:00 PM EST on the last business day before the meeting. After the deadline, the auditor will fax a report to the Election Officer before the vote at the meeting stating which Members from Northern Ontario voted by fax and the total votes for each candidate.

#### **OUR REASONS FOR THIS RESOLUTION ARE:**

1. We want to ensure that all members of CHF Canada have an equal opportunity to exercise their vote. Our co-op, like many others, is trying to spend our money carefully. We feel that if we receive the information about the candidates and have an opportunity to call the candidates and ask them questions before the election day that we, as a full board, can make an informed decision and cast our ballot. We do not see the requirement to travel to another community to vote as being necessary. For other members in the region, depending on where the election is held, they could have to travel by air (Thunder Bay) or drive eight hours on roads (Sault Ste. Marie to Timmins) that are often very poor. For example, for the election in 1996, members had to travel in a wicked snow storm in order to vote and many of us were worried about their safety. At the meeting that elected the candidate in 1998, the CHF Canada resolutions were not discussed until the next day so that members would have had to stay overnight if they wished to discuss the CHF Canada resolutions and vote. Because of the busy schedule of many of our members the time to travel to an out of town meeting is not available. We try to send members to the CHF Canada annual meeting. We have found that the time and money spent is worthwhile. To ask members to travel on another weekend a month or so before the CHF Canada annual meeting and be away from their families, work, etc. is very difficult.

2. When you look at the attendance at the last meeting that elected the candidate, there was less than 32% of the CHF Canada members and there were significant centres that had no representation at all (SSM, Thunder Bay and Timmins). We think that these facts signal a problem with the process and we think that because of the flexibility that is possible in the election of the Council we have an opportunity to make the process very accessible to all the members, both in time and money. We also think that the actual boards will be more involved in casting the ballots if a faxed-in vote is selected by the member. This will add to the democratic process.

<b>AGM ACTION:    Withdrawn</b>
---------------------------------

**RESOLUTION # R1b**

Raiffeisen Co-operative Homes

**Close of Nominations for Northern Ontario Council Member**

**WE RESOLVE:**

**THAT** the Ontario Region Operating Rules be amended by adding the following after the second sentence of paragraph 4.3(e):

Nominations will close on the 30<sup>th</sup> day before the date of the meeting.

**OUR REASONS FOR THIS RESOLUTION ARE:**

We want to ensure that all members of CHF Canada have an equal opportunity to exercise their vote in an informed fashion. We would like to be able to review information about the candidates as a board of directors and determine as a board who our co-op will support. Again, because of the flexibility allowed in the election of the Council, we would like to see the process developed so that full boards have more involvement. We would like the opportunity to review, well in advance of the election, information on candidates and have the opportunity to contact the candidates in the process of making our decision on who our co-op supports.

<b>AGM ACTION:    Withdrawn</b>
---------------------------------

**RESOLUTION # R1c**

Raiffeisen Co-operative Homes

**Notice of Meeting to Elect Northern Ontario Council Member**

**WE RESOLVE:**

**THAT** the Ontario Region Operating Rules be amended by adding the following after the second sentence of paragraph 4.3(e):

Notice of the meeting must be given to the Members from Northern Ontario on or before December 31 of the previous year.

**OUR REASONS FOR THIS RESOLUTION ARE:**

We want to ensure that all members of CHF Canada have an adequate and equal opportunity to plan for and run candidates. Our co-op received about 15 days notice of the day of the last election which included four days of the Easter Weekend. A number of CHF Canada members were made aware of the election date and location well in advance of when our co-op was notified. We are aware that the majority of CHF Canada members in the region were given the same notice as our co-op. The different notice to different members in the region is not fair. The meeting to elect the Northern Ontario Council member was held out of town. When we plan for the CHF Canada annual meeting we are aware of the dates a year in advance and so can plan for someone to attend and budget for the expense. CHF Canada has many mail-outs in December of each year, including the first information package about the CHF Canada AGM. It makes sense to us to have the information about the date and location of the meeting to elect the Northern Ontario position on the Ontario Council included in the package. In order for democracy to function, the election process, which includes the notice period, must be fair and equal for all members.

**AGM ACTION:    Withdrawn**

## **RESOLUTION # R1d**

Raiffeisen Co-operative Homes

### **Co-op Residency Requirement for Northern Ontario Council Member**

#### **WE RESOLVE:**

**THAT** the Ontario Region Operating Rules be amended by deleting the first sentence of paragraph 4.2(c) and substituting the following:

The Northern Ontario Council Member must be a member of a Member housing co-operative from Northern Ontario.

#### **OUR REASONS FOR THIS RESOLUTION ARE:**

1. We were very disappointed that, in the last election, no residents of housing co-ops ran for election. We feel that a housing co-op resident in Northern Ontario has a perspective that is different than other members in the Region. We also think that it adds to the credibility and perceived legitimacy to have a Northern Ontario housing co-op resident speaking for us in the Ontario political arena.
2. Under the Ontario Region Operating Rules, the requirement for Council members to live in a housing co-op applies only to three of the four at-large positions. This means that as many as six of the nine Council seats could be held by people who do not live in a co-op. If our amendment was successful, no member in the province will be disenfranchised since at least one seat would remain open to all members. In addition, the size of the Council would remain the same. (We did look at the possibility of adding a seat on the Council to solve part of our dissatisfaction with the Council but we think that our resolution will solve both of our issues better.)

<b>AGM ACTION:    Withdrawn</b>
---------------------------------

## RESOLUTION # R2

Ontario Council

### Getting Ontario Back into the Housing Business

#### WE RESOLVE:

1. **THAT**, after the 1999 provincial election, CHF Ontario Region work with housing co-ops, local federations and allies to persuade the new government to:
  - support the development of more housing co-ops and other non-profit housing through programs to:
    - build new homes,
    - acquire existing rental housing, and
    - convert public housing to co-op management
  - provide more rent supplements to existing co-ops and other non-profits, where needed
  - upload the cost of social housing programs back to the provincial government
  - follow through on positive reform of existing co-operative housing programs to give co-ops long-term financial security and real control of their homes
  - resist more cuts and other changes that will harm co-ops
2. **THAT** CHF Ontario Region work with our allies to make good quality, affordable housing a right and a reality for the people of Ontario. This will involve:
  - restoring the laws that protect private sector tenants
  - reversing the 21.6% cuts to the shelter and basic needs components of social assistance
  - increasing the funding for programs to assist people without homes and others who need special support.
3. **AND THAT** CHF Canada encourage the provincial government to repeal the unrealistic targeting plans given to housing co-ops so that co-ops are able to house all people.

#### OUR REASONS FOR THIS RESOLUTION ARE:

1. A new government in Ontario will give us an important opportunity to push for new housing programs. The co-op movement will work for a range of programs to meet the many housing needs of the people of Ontario.
2. Co-ops need to use the growing crisis of homelessness and the lack of affordable housing to press the government to take action.

3. The downloading of social housing programs to the municipalities is not good policy — even Mike Harris has said so. In spite of this, his government made the municipalities responsible for the cost of social housing. So far, the province still administers the programs. With the new government, we will continue to oppose the downloading of the administration, and we will work to make the province take back its responsibility for the cost of social housing.
4. We will continue to work for positive reform of the existing provincial co-op programs based on the principles set by Ontario members at the 1998 annual meeting.
5. The co-op movement has had to defend co-ops from cuts and other harmful changes during the terms of the last two Ontario governments. We have had some successes, such as the partial return of capital reserve funds. We will need determination and creativity to defend our homes against further attacks.
6. The Harris government has cut tenant protection laws and welfare cheques. This has led to increased misery and homelessness for low-income households. In recent months, several groups have been organizing effectively. The co-op movement must continue to support this work.

<b>AGM ACTION:    Adopted as amended</b>
--

## **ONTARIO REGION LATE RESOLUTIONS**

## **RESOLUTION # LR 1**

Ontario Council

### **Campaign with MPs on Social Housing Reform**

#### **WE RESOLVE:**

**THAT** CHF Canada step up the campaign to make sure that the Federal Government does not negotiate a social housing transfer deal with Ontario until provincial-program co-ops have confirmed that there is consensus among stakeholders, including co-ops, on the changes the province wants to make as part of the social housing reform process.

#### **OUR REASONS FOR THIS RESOLUTION ARE:**

1. The Harris government's decision to download social housing to municipalities is a big threat to provincial program co-ops. Municipalities can't afford the costs of these programs. They want to be able to make cuts to co-op budgets to cope with the financial crunch. And they want to be able to set their own rules about how the program will work in their area since they are paying the bill ("say for pay").
2. Provincial co-ops have lobbied for reform for years because the program doesn't let them run their housing in a business-like way and takes control away from members. Now co-ops need reform more than ever. They need a new deal that will give them financial security and protect their independence in the face of downloading.
3. CHF Ontario Region has taken part in the social housing reform process to try to win this protection for co-ops. The Social Housing Committee's final report last November included some good recommendations that make sense as building blocks for a long-term business relationship between co-ops and municipalities. But the report has some proposals that were added at the last minute, after co-op and non-profit representatives were shut out, that are unacceptable. They are a throw back to old style government programs.
4. CHF Ontario has told the Ontario Housing Minister, Al Leach, that we can't accept these changes but that we do want to get reform back on track. We have asked for a meeting but have been turned down twice. Meanwhile, seven months have gone by and the Minister has not commented on the report.
5. Ottawa and Queen's Park are now negotiating the social housing transfer deal. There is a very serious risk that the deal will be signed quickly after the provincial election. We need to do whatever it takes to delay that deal and win protection for provincial program co-ops. As things stand, the province needs federal consent to carry out social housing reform because 40% of the co-op units are cost shared by the two levels of government. Once a transfer deal is signed, the province can make whatever changes it wants.
6. The best card we have to play is a promise made by the federal housing Minister last fall. At a meeting with CHF Canada he said that he will not negotiate a transfer deal with Ontario until there is consensus among key stakeholders, including co-ops, on the changes the province wants to make to provincial programs.

7. In recent months, CHF Canada has been working hard to hold the Federal Government to that promise. Co-ops have met with about 40 Ontario MPs to ask for their support. Almost every one has said they understand our issue and will do what they can to help. This support is encouraging but we need to do a lot more to make sure that Ontario MPs hold the Minister to account. We need to turn up the heat right now
8. Our campaign on this issue must be carefully co-ordinated with our ongoing federal lobby of Ontario Liberal MPs to win support for our proposal for a new agency to administer federal co-op programs.

<b>AGM ACTION:    Adopted as amended</b>
--

## RESOLUTION # LR 2

Ontario Council

### New Rent Supplement Agreements for Federal Co-ops

#### WE RESOLVE:

THAT CHF Ontario Region make it a priority to work with members to press the federal, provincial and upper level municipal governments in Ontario to sign long-term rent supplement agreements with federal co-ops that use these programs.

#### OUR REASONS FOR THIS RESOLUTION ARE:

1. Federal co-ops and their members that receive rent supplement are at risk because their agreements have run out, never been signed or are very short-term. Members fear the loss of their homes and co-ops have to operate in a climate of business uncertainty because government won't agree to the long-term funding that co-ops need.
2. Here's where co-ops using the three programs stand:
  - **Community Sponsored Housing Program (CSHP):** This program is cost shared by the Ontario and federal governments. The fifteen year agreements have all run out. The province continues to make payments, but co-ops are operating with no funding commitment from government. The provincial and federal governments are blaming each other for the lack of action to fix the problem.
  - **Ontario Community Housing Assistance Program (OCHAP):** This program is paid for by the Ontario government. The five year agreements have all run out. The province has signed one or two year extension agreements with co-ops, as called for under the program. The short-term deals give co-ops and their members no security.
  - **Federal Co-op Housing Program (FCHP) Rent Supplement:** This program is cost shared by the Ontario and federal governments. No rent supplement agreements were ever signed. The province continues to make payments based on agreement with the federal government that 50% of the units in these co-ops will receive rent supplement. The province could back out of the agreement at any time.
3. The risk to co-ops has increased since January 1998 when the Harris government downloaded the province's share of program costs (about 40%-50%) to municipalities. Municipalities will also take over the job of administering the programs. Local governments can't afford the cost of this type of income support program □ and so far they haven't made any promise to continue the funding.
4. For years, the co-op sector has tried to get government to sign long-term rent supplement agreements with federal co-ops. They keep telling us that they won't pull the plug on the funding but they haven't been willing to sign new long-term contracts. The time has come to turn up the heat on all three levels of government to get them live up to their obligations.

<b>AGM ACTION: Adopted as presented</b>
---

## **RESOLUTION # LR 3**

Ontario Council

### **Support for Federal Campaign Outside Ontario**

#### **WE RESOLVE:**

**THAT** CHF Canada's Ontario members use their influence to convince the Federal Government to:

- remove housing co-ops from any social housing transfer talks with British Columbia, Alberta and Prince Edward Island, and
- agree to take back the administration of federal program co-ops if any province that has signed a transfer agreement asks them to do so.

#### **OUR REASONS FOR THIS RESOLUTION ARE:**

1. The Federal Government's decision to take housing co-ops out of any transfer talks with Ontario was a great victory for co-op housing. But we cannot be satisfied with a victory that only benefits housing co-ops in one part of the country.
2. Housing co-ops everywhere were part of the campaign that won a victory in Ontario. Now it is time for us to show our support for co-ops in other parts of the country.
3. British Columbia, Alberta and Prince Edward Island have all told the Federal Government that they don't want to discuss the transfer of federal program housing co-ops to provincial administration. But, so far, the government has refused to offer the same deal it has given to Ontario co-ops --that they won't be part of any social housing transfer to the province. We need to make sure that all regions get the same deal.
4. And now that Ontario co-ops have been told that they will not be part of a federal transfer, provinces that have already accepted co-ops as part of a social housing agreement should be given a chance to say that they want the co-ops returned to federal administration.

<b>AGM ACTION:    Adopted as presented</b>
--