

AGM Operating Report for 2024

This past year started out very hectic with over 70 clients a week being normal. It became obvious very quickly, that we were not going to be able to sustain this pace due to increasing costs and demands on the volunteers. The Board made the decision to switch to providing service every other week as of the 1st of May. This relieved the load on the staff on Thursdays immediately and started to lower our overall costs. It was not expected to be a huge deduction as we knew that our numbers were going to continue to increase. By the fall and carrying on into the new year, numbers were back up to 50 clients per week. These numbers have remained steady since and we expect that these number will begin to rise again shortly.

We provided service to a base client load of 253. This is a 10% increase from 2023. They represented 639 family members. We handed out a total of 3663 hampers during the year plus 103 Christmas hampers. The food going out the door including all hampers was valued at \$181,963.51. Our purchased food for the year was \$119,589.54. This was \$20,000 less than 2023. We handed out a total of 87 emergency packs for the year. Food donations from community totaled 23,367.5 pounds at a value of \$96,507.78. Our Food Rescue program in town brought in 27,464.2 pounds at a value of \$113,424.15. Monetary and in-kind donations for the year were \$186,711.36. This amazing total was \$70,000 over 2023. This is a direct result of the generosity of our community. Christmas donations alone were a clear \$35,000 higher than they have ever been. Our operating costs for the year were \$62,171.09 compared to \$43,765.87 for 2023. This reflects the increase in rent and the salary charge for the whole year.

We continue to take advantage of the SNAP programs and the Waterloo Food Bank share as much as possible. We participated in the Feed Ontario Chicken program but only received one load of chicken as the overall donation from the CFO was less last year. We are slated to receive two pallets in 2025. We took the opportunity to share as much as possible with the other Haldimand Food Banks, splitting numerous SNAP loads with them as well as sharing a purchased pallet of cereal with Cayuga.

After 8 months of diligent work, the Hagersville Food Bank was accredited with the Food Banks Canada Standards of Excellence program. As of February, this made us one of only 19 food banks in Ontario that had achieved this. There are 1200 food banks that need to complete this in the province. This entitles us to access to grant programs and offers from Food Banks Canada and will allow us to continue as Feed Ontario members after the spring of 2026.

Looking forward to the rest of 2025, there are no expected program changes, other than the addition of the Summer school snack program for our clients children. We do expect the client numbers to steadily increase, due to the increasingly hostile economic and political conditions, and we may need to look at either extending hours or adding an additional day of service per week. If this happens, it will probably be in the fall. This fall should also see a final decision on the purchase of a building.

Our volunteer program is healthy, thanks to Deborah, and is ever changing. We are in constant need of volunteers and the need for younger help is becoming more obvious as well. I am certain we will have student help during the summer months, but coming up with the younger help during the school year is difficult.

I anticipate another busy year with as few challenges as possible.

Dave