

ANNUAL REPORT 2006-2007



MANITOBA WOMEN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL CONSEIL CONSULTATIF DES FEMMES DU MANITOBA

September 28, 2007

Honourable Nancy Allan Minister responsible for the Status of Women Room 317 - 450 Broadway Legislative Building Winnipeg, MB R3C oV8

Dear Minister:

I am pleased to submit to you the Annual Report of the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council for the fiscal year 2006/2007. This report provides the details of Council's fiscal activities and expenditures. Crystal Laborero Chaired the Council for all but the final six weeks of the period in the report and I want to express my appreciation for her work on behalf of the women of Manitoba.

Sincerely,

Marlene Bertrand Chairperson



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Chairperson's Message

It is my pleasure to greet the women of Manitoba as the new Chair of the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council, having been appointed to this position in February 2007. In 2005 we celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Council; I am inheriting a rich history and a challenging role, thanks to the many women on Council who have come before me. I am reminded of the remarks made by the Right Honourable Beverley McLachlin, Chief Justice of Canada, at the Famous Five Breakfast in 2000 when she expressed the view that "behind every successful woman are all the women who came before her".

I especially want to express my appreciation to my predecessor, Crystal Laborero, and to outgoing members of Council for their work and dedication. We also are indebted to Honourable Nancy Allan, Minister responsible for the Status of Women, and to the Government of Manitoba for their continued commitment to ensuring that the women of Manitoba have a voice in Government and in the development of gender-sensitive policies, programs and legislation. It is worth noting that Manitoba has the only remaining provincial Women's Advisory Council west of the Quebec border; eight other women's advisory councils exist in the Atlantic region and in the territories. I want to assure you that I will do my best to justify the confidence and trust that has been placed in me. Finally, I want to recognize the Council staff who support the work of the Council.

This is an exciting time for the women of Manitoba and for the Council. The current Council members bring rich and diverse backgrounds and experience to their positions. As we begin the Council's next quarter century, it is important to briefly look back at what has been achieved and then turn our attention and energy to what lies ahead. My entire career has been dedicated to working for and with the women of Manitoba. I am honoured to have this opportunity to continue this work in a new and exciting role. While you will see changes in how we do our work in the coming year, there will be no change to what our work is. We will continue to move toward our goal – promoting the equal participation of women in our society.

Marlene Bertrand Chairperson

Accomplishments

- Planned and coordinated the Annual Meeting of the Coalition of Provincial and Territorial Advisory Councils on the Status of Women. The Coalition was formed in 1995 to undertake strategic action on issues of concern to Canadian women, as a result of the cessation of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women that same year. Coalition members, representing women's advisory councils in five provinces and three territories, met in Ottawa, December 9-12, 2006. They discussed a communication strategy, regional reports and best practices, met with MPs and senators, and attended a roundtable and reception hosted by the Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA). During the past year, the Coalition also made a submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Status of Women, prepared by the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council, in regard to funding cuts to Status of Women Canada (SWC), the closure of 12 out of 16 regional offices, the removal of "equality" from its mandate, the need for gender-based analysis with teeth and SWC-funded research as key to evidence-based decision-making.
- Rural Team Manitoba's Standing Committee on Women's Issues, co-chaired by the Council's Executive Director, held symposiums in Thompson, The Pas and Dauphin on the Changing Needs of Rural, Northern & Remote Women between October 2006 and March 2007. At these sessions, more than 120 participants discussed issues identified in the June 2005 Changing Needs of Rural and Northern Women in Manitoba research report, shared the challenges they face and made recommendations to address issues of concern at the community level. Issues raised included: childcare, education and training, employment and income, and health safety and security. The symposiums will help to build a base of information around which to develop new strategies.
- **Provided informational sessions** during the lunch hour for the community on the following topics of interest to women: Women's equality and the *Canadian Human Rights Act*; Powers of attorney, health care directives and wills: tools for personal and financial planning; Today's women and preventing HIV/AIDS; Twenty years later has the Charter made a difference to Manitoba women?; Information on protection orders: the *Domestic Violence and Stalking Act* one year after amendments; Gender and HIV/AIDS: the global is local; and the Domestic Violence Intervention Unit.
- Approximately 10,000 copies of the expanded seventh edition of Council's Parenting on Your Own: A Handbook for Single Parent Families have been distributed by Manitoba Material Distribution Agency. This booklet was printed in March 2006 in partnership with Healthy Child Manitoba; Healthy Populations, Manitoba Healthy Living Ministry and the Regional Health Authorities of Manitoba (RHAM).
- *Maintained the Council's interactive web site*, www.mwac.mb.ca, which recorded 115,896 page views, up from 112,289 last year. The number of visitors was 33,384 and the 2005-2006 Annual Report was downloaded 459 times in English and 308 times in French. Upcoming events, information on research, reports and services of interest to women and their families, and links to other women's organizations are also included.

Advisory Council

GOAL:

To advance the goal of equal participation of women in society and to promote changes in social, legal and economic structures to that end.

BACKGROUND:

In 1970, The Royal Commission on the Status of Women recommended the creation of a federal Status of Women Council and similar agencies concerned with the status of women in each of the provinces and territories.

As a result of concerted lobbying by women's organizations across the country, a federal Advisory Council on the Status of Women was established in 1973 and several provincial and territorial advisory councils were created in the 1980s. Since then, the federal council and some of the provincial councils have ceased operation. Manitoba is the only province west of Quebec with an arm's-length council to advise government on issues of concern to women. The three territories also have similar councils.

The Government of Manitoba established the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women through Order-in-Council in 1980. Bill 3, *The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women's Act*, was introduced in the Manitoba Legislature on March 2, 1987. The Act received Royal Assent on July 17, 1987.

In appointing members to the Council, the Manitoba Government endeavours to select persons who are representative of the various geographic, ethno-cultural and socio-economic sectors of Manitoba.

In December 1991, Bill 5, *The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act* was introduced in the legislature which sought a change of name for the Council. The amendment to the Act received Royal Assent on June 24, 1992 and as a result was renamed the *Manitoba Women's Advisory Council Act*.

MANDATE:

To advise the Minister responsible on matters relating to the achievement of full and equal participation of women in society. The Advisory Council advises the Minister on such matters as are referred by the Minister to the Council for consideration and on such other matters as the Council may consider appropriate to draw to the attention of the Minister.

ROLE:

- To consult with Manitoba women on emerging and existing issues concerning women to enable the Council to offer advice and recommendations to the Minister. This consultation process includes women from rural, northern and urban communities, as well as Aboriginal, immigrant, Francophone, visible minority, lesbian, trans-sexual women and women with disabilities.
- To collaborate with women's organizations to support and facilitate community-based activities to improve the status of women.

• To formulate and submit to the Minister recommendations that can shape policies, programs and legislation which promote the equality of women.

STRUCTURE:

The Advisory Council is made up of women from a number of walks of life who are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba. It is funded by the Provincial Government, and reports to the Minister responsible for the Status of Women.

The Council consists of a Chairperson and at least eight and no more than 18 other members, appointed by government for terms of three and two years, respectively.

The Council is supported by a staff of four civil servants.

DUTIES:

To fulfill its duties under the Act, the Council shall:

- advise the Minister on such matters relating to equality of status for women as the Minister may refer to it for consideration, or as the Council, on its own initiative, undertakes for consideration;
- recommend to the Minister policies, projects, programs of research, study or activity, legislation and other steps and initiatives;
- designed to advance the goal of equality of status for women; and
- carry out such other duties and functions related to equality of status for women as the Minister may direct or as the Council on its own initiative may undertake.

POWERS:

In carrying out its duties, the Council may:

- receive petitions and submissions from persons, groups and organizations;
- hold public meetings;
- disseminate information to the public;
- conduct, or participate in, programs of research, study or activity;
- carry out any of its projects and activities in co-operation with other bodies both inside and outside the province; and
- engage, on a temporary basis or for a specific purpose, such persons who have a technical
 or specialized knowledge of any matter relating to the work of Council as the Council
 considers necessary to advise and assist the Council.

Members of Council

Council's membership is representative of urban, rural and northern women, including Aboriginal, Francophone, visible minority and young women. Members have expertise and experience in a broad range of areas of concern to women including: health, education, business, agriculture, volunteerism, employment equity, single-parenting, employment and training, care-giving and child-rearing, work in the home and in the paid labour market.

Council members consult regularly with representatives of women's organizations throughout the province and with individuals who are working at the community level on women's issues.

Members bring concerns expressed by Manitoba women to the regular meetings of the Council where they determine priorities and formulate recommendations to the Minister.

The length of council members' terms is two years with a possible re-appointment for an additional two years. The chairperson is appointed for a three-year term and may be appointed for one further term. The list below includes all those who were Council members from April 1, 2006 to March 31, 2007 or for any portion thereof.

MARLENE BERTRAND, Chairperson (Winnipeg)

Throughout her 25-year career in domestic violence prevention both inside and outside government, Marlene has been a passionate advocate for women in Manitoba. From 1992-2006 she was director of the provincial government's Family Violence Prevention Branch. Prior to that, she was a director of women's shelters in Winnipeg and Brandon. Marlene has also worked internationally in helping countries develop programs in response to intimate violence. A member of the Order of Canada, Marlene is also a recipient of the Manitoba Service Excellence Award for Leadership and the YWCA Women of Distinction Award. She was appointed Council Chairperson on February 1, 2007.

MARICOR ANDRADA, (Winnipeg)

Maricor works part-time with the Winnipeg Girls and Boys Club and plans to return to school next year. She is a recipient of the Premier's Volunteer of the Year Award.

BERNICE CARTWRIGHT, (Flin Flon)

Bernice was the Aboriginal Coordinator at the Flin Flon General Hospital. Her passion is to educate Aboriginal people in their own language about health issues and other relevant information. Her areas of interest include foster children and the homeless. She resigned in August 2006 to further her education.

JULIE CHALMERS, (Griswold)

Julie is a Community Health Representative, Sioux Valley Dakota Nation. She volunteers at women's shelters in Brandon and Portage la Prairie and offers support groups and sharing circles for women and men on a weekly basis in areas such as spousal abuse, sexual abuse and alcohol-related issues. Her term expired on April 6, 2007.

LAURIE FAVELL-MOWAT, (Selkirk)

Laurie works with Aboriginal youth at the Behavioural Health Foundation Male Youth Services in Selkirk. She is the co-founder of the Winnipeg Aboriginal Film and Video Festival which she co-chaired for the first two years, the first program co-ordinator with the Ototema Mentorship program and a blues/rock musician. Her interests are poverty issues, Aboriginal rights and women's equality.

PAM HARRIGAN, (Dauphin)

Pam is employed with Metis Child, Family & Community Services in the South Parkland Area. She has been involved with such organizations as the Parkland Status of Women and the Parkland Crisis Centre & Women's Shelter. Her interests include issues related to poverty, racism, violence against women, housing and women's health. Her term expired on September 28, 2006.

DIANE HARTLEY, (Minnedosa)

Diane is a councilor for the Town of Minnedosa. As a lawyer with a part-time law practice and a full-time instructor in the Business Division of Assiniboine Community College, her interests revolve around issues affecting rural women and families, family law issues, and enhancing post-secondary educational opportunities for women.

SHEILA HILLIER, (Gimli)

Sheila is the Director and Senior Counsellor of the Interlake Women's Resource Centre. She also co-chairs the Women's Resource Centre/Service Coalition of Manitoba. She is active in several groups and committees that address women's issues, focusing on domestic violence, violence against women, poverty, low-income housing, food security and pay equity. Her second term expired on April 6, 2007.

BONNIE HOFFER-STEIMAN, (Winnipeg)

Bonnie's nursing involvement has encompassed rural and urban communities in an administrative capacity. Currently a hospital-based social worker in Winnipeg, she has volunteered on several boards and with recent immigrants to Canada. Her interests include poverty, health promotion, Aboriginal and immigrant issues. Her second term expired on April 6, 2007.

MARY-ANNE KANDRACK, (Winnipeg)

Mary-Anne teaches Sociology at the University of Manitoba. She brings to the Council a strong interest in women's issues and a variety of board experience. Her second term expired on April 6, 2007.

JUSTINE KIWANUKA, (Winnipeg)

Justine is a student in Sociology at the University of Winnipeg. A former Program Officer with Disabled People's International (DPI) and liaison officer for DPI at the United Nations, she is a founding member of the United Nations Platform for Action Committee (UNPAC) and involved in several other community organizations.

MANJU LODHA, (Winnipeg)

Manju is an artist and author of three books with a multicultural, feminist perspective. She is a board member of the Manitoba Association for Multicultural Education and the National Indian Council of Canada, Manitoba Chapter. She has also been active with the United Nations Platform for Action Committee (UNPAC) and the Hindu Society of Manitoba.

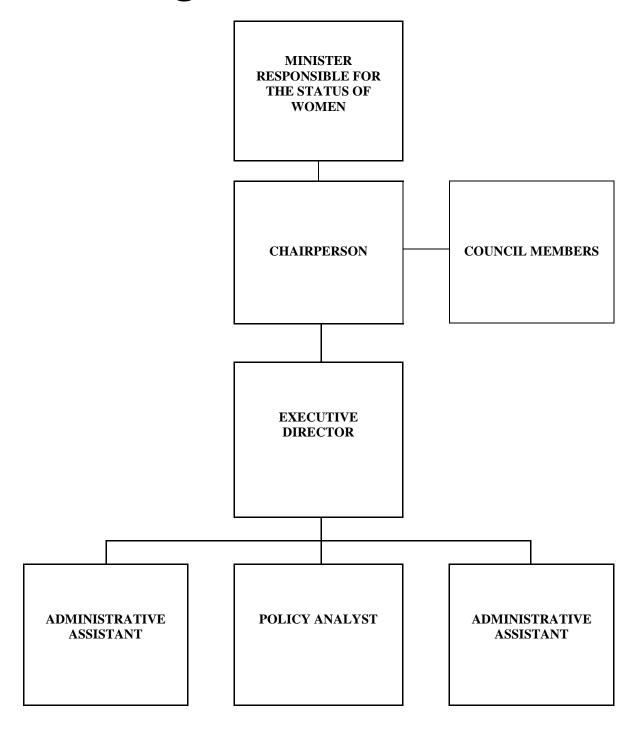
JOËLLE SALTEL, (Winnipeg)

Joëlle is fluently bilingual, as well as being Vice-President, Youth Programs, Folk Arts Council of Manitoba, a graduate student at the University of Manitoba and actively involved with the Francophone community.

BARBARA TOEWS, (Lowe Farm)

Barbara and her husband Bill have farmed in the Red River Valley for more than 30 years. She also taught seasonal workers in a full-time literacy program for 12 years. Since retiring from off-farm work, she has been involved with programs for immigrant women and children and is a member of Well-Connected, an organization which assists rural families dealing with eating disorders. Barbara's second term expired on April 6, 2007.

Organization Chart



Activities

In order to carry out its advisory function, the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council members work closely with women and women's organizations throughout the province. Issues and concerns are identified through this interaction, and are brought forward for discussion at Council meetings. Recommendations are made to the Minister responsible for the Status of Women. Other avenues for bringing issues to Council's attention are:

- through members of Council who bring issues from their regions to Council meetings;
- by individuals, organizations and colleagues who identify concerns;
- by individuals who telephone the Advisory Council office seeking assistance with various concerns;
- by those invited to make presentations at Council meetings on issues related to women;
- through participation in Council-coordinated community education programs;
- through membership in the Coalition of Provincial and Territorial Advisory Councils on the Status of Women,
- perusal of relevant research; and
- through feedback from the website.

I. Meetings

In accordance with *The Manitoba Women's Advisory Council Act*, the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council held six meetings in 2006/2007. An outreach meeting was held in Thompson in conjunction with a day-long symposium, titled *Changing Needs of Rural, Northern & Remote Women in Manitoba*, organized by Rural Team Manitoba's Standing Committee on Women's Issues. Five meetings took place in Winnipeg. The dates and locations were as follows:

- □ April 22, 2006 in Winnipeg
- □ September 23, 2006 in Winnipeg
- □ October 19, 2006 in Thompson
- □ March 3, 2007 via conference call
- □ March 17, 2007 in Winnipeg
- □ March 18, 2007 in Winnipeg

II. Priorities

The Council tracks and addresses ongoing and current issues that affect the lives of women and their families. Council prioritized five areas upon which to focus its work:

- women's health and wellness
- the economic status of women (women living in poverty)
- violence against women and girls
- child care
- women in conflict with the law

Examples of Council's work on priority issues:

1. Women's health and wellness

- Lunch & Learn Today's Women and Preventing HIV/AIDS and Gender and HIV/AIDS: The Global is Local were the titles of two of Council's community information sessions focusing on women's health.
- Advisory Notes/Memos Council brought forward to the Minister such issues as: women and HIV/AIDS in Manitoba, and research on women and HIV/AIDS.
- Information gathering and dissemination Council attended the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba's community discussion on mental health, a Disordered Eating Seminar and a Town Hall on Medicare by the Women's Health Clinic.
- Collaboration Council members and/or the Executive Director attended meetings with the Canadian Women's Health Network and Women's Health Clinic to discuss current women's issues and opportunities for collaboration.

2. Economic status of women/poverty issues

- Lunch & Learn Poverty/economic status was the theme of Council's community information sessions, which dealt with the following topics:
- Women's Equality and the Canadian Human Rights Act
- Powers of Attorney, Health Care Directives and Wills: Tools for personal and financial planning
- Twenty Years Later Has the Charter Made a Difference to Manitoba Women?
- Advisory Notes/Memos Council brought forward to the Minister such issues as: poverty in Manitoba, women and agricultural policy, the changing needs of rural, remote and northern women, the drafting of a gender-neutral Manitoba Food Charter, the declining state of Lake Winnipeg and the imperative for action to restore its water quality and sustainability.
- Collaboration Council met with a staff representative of the North End Women's Centre's Money and Women Project to discuss strategic action and the future of this project.

The Council is part of a cross sectoral committee, led by the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg and Campaign 2000, which organized a day-long workshop on poverty and people with disabilities.

Women in Action – Council participated in the development of this group, which raised awareness about budget cuts, office closures and change of mandate to Status of Women Canada, as well as the need for safe, affordable, accessible housing for women and their families.

CIDA China Project – Council met with a delegation of women from Beijing who visited Manitoba to learn about government gender initiatives in rural Manitoba.

UNIFEM Local to Global 2007 fundraiser – This event focused on Women Building Peace, presented by Dr. Margaret Fulton.

3. Violence against women and girls

- Lunch & Learn Council hosted sessions on Information on Protection Orders: *The Domestic Violence and Stalking Act* One Year After Amendments and on the Domestic Violence Intervention Unit.
- Round Table Discussion and Resource Sharing Sessions on Violence Prevention: Programs and Services for Girls and Young Women Council held a meeting of service providers, women's organizations, researchers and relevant government departments.
- Media Awareness Initiative About Sexually Exploited Youth (MAISEY) –
 Council is a founding member of this committee of individuals working directly
 with, or concerned about, sexually exploited youth and the media's portrayal of
 this issue. Council assisted with the development of a media resource for contacts
 to discuss the situation of sexually exploited youth.
- Community participation Council attended the Silent Witness Program Memorial, the launch of the Stop Sex With Kids initiative, the Take Back the Night March, the Silent Vigil for the Sisters in Spirit Campaign, a human trafficking panel discussion, a workshop on youth and gangs, two Native Women Transition Centre day-long forums on the incidence of sexual victimization among Aboriginal women and the launch of Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre's self-defense courses. Council's former Chairperson was a guest speaker at the Congress of Black Women Manitoba Chapter's panel discussion on domestic violence.
- Sunrise Memorial Council hosted its tenth annual Sunrise Memorial on the anniversary date of the Montreal Massacre. This year's memorial involved students from the University of Manitoba and featured the Silent Witness Project, which depicts silhouettes of women who died as a result of their partner's violence. The Council distributed donated toys to women's shelters.

4. Child care and related issues

- Child Care Regulatory Review Committee Council has participated on this committee since it was established in 1996 to advise the Minister of Family Services and Housing about childcare.
- Information gathering and dissemination Council brought to the Minister's attention formal recommendations to the Minister of Family Services and Housing by the Childcare Regulatory Review Committee to enhance childcare in this province, in view of the cancellation of federal funding under the 2005 Early Learning and Child Care agreement.

5. Women in conflict with the law/incarcerated women

- Ongoing collaboration Council met with senior Justice officials to discuss the new women's correctional facility.
- *Criminalizing Women*, a newly published critical feminist analysis of the situation of incarcerated women, was the focus of a Roundtable presentation by Elizabeth Comack, Professor, University of Manitoba.

III. Presentations

The Council heard from individuals and groups in the community on a variety of topics of interest to women and their families. These presentations inform the Council of current issues, programs and research and enhance its advisory capacity to government. Presentations included:

- A day-long symposium on October 19, 2006 in Thompson, titled *Changing Needs of Rural, Northern and Remote Women in Manitoba*, hosted by Rural Team Manitoba's Standing Committee on Women's Issues, which focused on the committee's 2005 research report and the identification of knowledge gaps.
- A presentation on March 18, 2007 titled *An Overview of Manitoba Housing* by Gaethorne Burns.

IV. Partnerships

Some of Council's community partnerships involved Chairing the Coalition of Provincial and Territorial Advisory Councils on the Status of Women; participating in the Legal Education & Action Fund (LEAF) Breakfast Fundraiser; point of ticket sales for UNIFEM's Local to Global Fundraiser; member of: Rural Team Manitoba and it's Standing Committee on Women's Issues; Selection Committee for the Winnipeg Citizens Hall of Fame; the Child Care Regulatory Review Committee; the Media Awareness Initiative about Sexually Exploited Youth (MAISEY); the Poverty Coalition; UNPAC's Wise Women's Committee and the Women in Action group.

V. Issues and Recommendations

As a result of Council's research and interactions with communities, issues of concern were identified and studied, and recommendations made to the Minister. The issues addressed included: accessible, safe, affordable housing for older women; growing retention and integration of immigrant women; income security; health and wellness; HIV/Aids; needs of rural and northern women; violence and the Media; child care; correctional services and justice issues; human trafficking; gender-based analysis; child support policies; social inclusion.

Community Involvement

I. Liaison

The Council worked with, provided support services to, and maintained ties with more than 800-900 women's groups, community organizations, relevant government agencies and service providers.

II. Support Services to the Community

- **Provision of a One-Stop Community Resource Library**. The Council continued to provide a professionally catalogued inventory of relevant resource material on issues of concern to women for community use.
- Provision of Support Services to the Community. The Council continued to provide
 meeting room space and on-site assistance with photocopying, mailing and faxing to
 non-profit, equality-seeking women's organizations and community members at no
 cost.
- **Provision of Information and Referrals to the Community**. The Council supported women who e-mail or phone the office with personal issues or questions by offering appropriate information and referral sources to facilitate solutions of their problems.
- **Provision of a Weekly List of Up-Coming Community Events**. The Council compiled Council Currents, a weekly calendar of events and other items of interest to women, which is faxed or e-mailed to almost 1,000 organizations and interested individuals, as well as to several community-based networks. This unique publication is also available on Council's interactive website.
- *Sponsorship of Community Events*. The Council continued to provide limited sponsorship to community-based events.
- *Participation in the Community*. The Council supported relevant community activities by attendance at more than 250 community events, conferences and meetings. These included participation in numerous fundraising events, open houses, workshops and annual general meetings hosted by women's organizations, as well as relevant community recognition awards ceremonies.
- Enhanced Interactive Web Site. The web site provides two-way communication for users to request information via e-mail, as well as linkages to resources listed in the electronic bilingual version of Parenting on Your Own: A Handbook For One-Parent Families and in Council Currents. This electronic venue has expanded Council's informational role to the community.
- Consultative Support. The Council serves in a consultative capacity on multidisciplinary steering committees and as an information resource for colleagues and peers, community-driven events, equality-seeking organizations, research, academia and strategic action, locally, nationally and, occasionally, at the international level.

Future Directions

Each year the Council identifies priority areas of concern to women and their families during a strategic planning session to determine an annual workplan. In 2006/2007, the Council focused on women's economic security, women's health and well-being, community liaison, outreach to rural and northern communities, women in conflict with the law, child care, and violence against women and girls. As we look ahead, Council will communicate with the Minister to identify and set future priorities.

Publications

Reports:

• Annual Report 2005 - 2006

Others:

- Parenting on Your Own: A Handbook For One-Parent Families: Seventh Edition - March 2006
- Manitoba Women's Advisory Council: A Voice for Manitoba Women: Brochure on the Advisory Council - March, 2007

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Marlene Bertrand Chairperson

Accomplishments

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In 1970, The Royal Commission on the Status of Women recommended the creation of a federal Status of Women Council and similar agencies concerned with the status of women in each of the provinces and territories.

As a result of concerted lobbying by women's organizations across the country, a federal Advisory Council on the Status of Women was established in 1973 and several provincial and territorial advisory councils were created in the 1980s. Since then, the federal council and some of the provincial councils have ceased operation. Manitoba is the only province west of Quebec with an arm's-length council to advise government on issues of concern to women. The three territories also have similar councils.

The Government of Manitoba established the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women through Order-in-Council in 1980. Bill 3, *The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women's Act*, was introduced in the Manitoba Legislature on March 2, 1987. The Act received Royal Assent on July 17, 1987.

In appointing members to the Council, the Manitoba Government endeavours to select persons who are representative of the various geographic, ethno-cultural and socio-economic sectors of Manitoba.

In December 1991, Bill 5, *The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act* was introduced in the legislature which sought a change of name for the Council. The amendment to the Act received Royal Assent on June 24, 1992 and as a result was renamed the *Manitoba Women's Advisory Council Act*.

MANDATE:

To advise the Minister responsible on matters relating to the achievement of full and equal participation of women in society. The Advisory Council advises the Minister on such matters as are referred by the Minister to the Council for consideration and on such other matters as the Council may consider appropriate to draw to the attention of the Minister.

ROLE:

- To consult with Manitoba women on emerging and existing issues concerning women to enable the Council to offer advice and recommendations to the Minister. This consultation process includes women from rural, northern and urban communities, as well as Aboriginal, immigrant, Francophone, visible minority, lesbian, trans-sexual women and women with disabilities.
- To collaborate with women's organizations to support and facilitate community-based activities to improve the status of women.

• To formulate and submit to the Minister recommendations that can shape policies, programs and legislation which promote the equality of women.

STRUCTURE:

The Advisory Council is made up of women from a number of walks of life who are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba. It is funded by the Provincial Government, and reports to the Minister responsible for the Status of Women.

The Council consists of a Chairperson and at least eight and no more than 18 other members, appointed by government for terms of three and two years, respectively.

The Council is supported by a staff of four civil servants.

DUTIES:

To fulfill its duties under the Act, the Council shall:

- advise the Minister on such matters relating to equality of status for women as the Minister may refer to it for consideration, or as the Council, on its own initiative, undertakes for consideration;
- recommend to the Minister policies, projects, programs of research, study or activity, legislation and other steps and initiatives;
- designed to advance the goal of equality of status for women; and
- carry out such other duties and functions related to equality of status for women as the Minister may direct or as the Council on its own initiative may undertake.

POWERS:

In carrying out its duties, the Council may:

- receive petitions and submissions from persons, groups and organizations;
- hold public meetings;
- disseminate information to the public;
- conduct, or participate in, programs of research, study or activity;
- carry out any of its projects and activities in co-operation with other bodies both inside and outside the province; and
- engage, on a temporary basis or for a specific purpose, such persons who have a technical
 or specialized knowledge of any matter relating to the work of Council as the Council
 considers necessary to advise and assist the Council.

Members of Council

Council's membership is representative of urban, rural and northern women, including Aboriginal, Francophone, visible minority and young women. Members have expertise and experience in a broad range of areas of concern to women including: health, education, business, agriculture, volunteerism, employment equity, single-parenting, employment and training, care-giving and child-rearing, work in the home and in the paid labour market.

Council members consult regularly with representatives of women's organizations throughout the province and with individuals who are working at the community level on women's issues.

Members bring concerns expressed by Manitoba women to the regular meetings of the Council where they determine priorities and formulate recommendations to the Minister.

The length of council members' terms is two years with a possible re-appointment for an additional two years. The chairperson is appointed for a three-year term and may be appointed for one further term. The list below includes all those who were Council members from April 1, 2006 to March 31, 2007 or for any portion thereof.

MARLENE BERTRAND, Chairperson (Winnipeg)

Throughout her 25-year career in domestic violence prevention both inside and outside government, Marlene has been a passionate advocate for women in Manitoba. From 1992-2006 she was director of the provincial government's Family Violence Prevention Branch. Prior to that, she was a director of women's shelters in Winnipeg and Brandon. Marlene has also worked internationally in helping countries develop programs in response to intimate violence. A member of the Order of Canada, Marlene is also a recipient of the Manitoba Service Excellence Award for Leadership and the YWCA Women of Distinction Award. She was appointed Council Chairperson on February 1, 2007.

MARICOR ANDRADA, (Winnipeg)

Maricor works part-time with the Winnipeg Girls and Boys Club and plans to return to school next year. She is a recipient of the Premier's Volunteer of the Year Award.

BERNICE CARTWRIGHT, (Flin Flon)

Bernice was the Aboriginal Coordinator at the Flin Flon General Hospital. Her passion is to educate Aboriginal people in their own language about health issues and other relevant information. Her areas of interest include foster children and the homeless. She resigned in August 2006 to further her education.

JULIE CHALMERS, (Griswold)

Julie is a Community Health Representative, Sioux Valley Dakota Nation. She volunteers at women's shelters in Brandon and Portage la Prairie and offers support groups and sharing circles for women and men on a weekly basis in areas such as spousal abuse, sexual abuse and alcohol-related issues. Her term expired on April 6, 2007.

LAURIE FAVELL-MOWAT, (Selkirk)

Laurie works with Aboriginal youth at the Behavioural Health Foundation Male Youth Services in Selkirk. She is the co-founder of the Winnipeg Aboriginal Film and Video Festival which she co-chaired for the first two years, the first program co-ordinator with the Ototema Mentorship program and a blues/rock musician. Her interests are poverty issues, Aboriginal rights and women's equality.

PAM HARRIGAN, (Dauphin)

Pam is employed with Metis Child, Family & Community Services in the South Parkland Area. She has been involved with such organizations as the Parkland Status of Women and the Parkland Crisis Centre & Women's Shelter. Her interests include issues related to poverty, racism, violence against women, housing and women's health. Her term expired on September 28, 2006.

DIANE HARTLEY, (Minnedosa)

Diane is a councilor for the Town of Minnedosa. As a lawyer with a part-time law practice and a full-time instructor in the Business Division of Assiniboine Community College, her interests revolve around issues affecting rural women and families, family law issues, and enhancing post-secondary educational opportunities for women.

SHEILA HILLIER, (Gimli)

Sheila is the Director and Senior Counsellor of the Interlake Women's Resource Centre. She also co-chairs the Women's Resource Centre/Service Coalition of Manitoba. She is active in several groups and committees that address women's issues, focusing on domestic violence, violence against women, poverty, low-income housing, food security and pay equity. Her second term expired on April 6, 2007.

BONNIE HOFFER-STEIMAN, (Winnipeg)

Bonnie's nursing involvement has encompassed rural and urban communities in an administrative capacity. Currently a hospital-based social worker in Winnipeg, she has volunteered on several boards and with recent immigrants to Canada. Her interests include poverty, health promotion, Aboriginal and immigrant issues. Her second term expired on April 6, 2007.

MARY-ANNE KANDRACK, (Winnipeg)

Mary-Anne teaches Sociology at the University of Manitoba. She brings to the Council a strong interest in women's issues and a variety of board experience. Her second term expired on April 6, 2007.

JUSTINE KIWANUKA, (Winnipeg)

Justine is a student in Sociology at the University of Winnipeg. A former Program Officer with Disabled People's International (DPI) and liaison officer for DPI at the United Nations, she is a founding member of the United Nations Platform for Action Committee (UNPAC) and involved in several other community organizations.

MANJU LODHA, (Winnipeg)

Manju is an artist and author of three books with a multicultural, feminist perspective. She is a board member of the Manitoba Association for Multicultural Education and the National Indian Council of Canada, Manitoba Chapter. She has also been active with the United Nations Platform for Action Committee (UNPAC) and the Hindu Society of Manitoba.

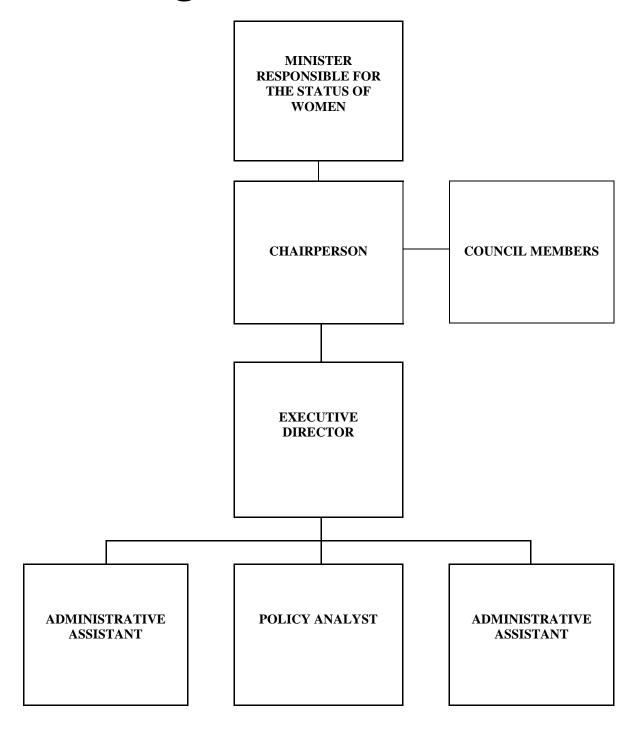
JOËLLE SALTEL, (Winnipeg)

Joëlle is fluently bilingual, as well as being Vice-President, Youth Programs, Folk Arts Council of Manitoba, a graduate student at the University of Manitoba and actively involved with the Francophone community.

BARBARA TOEWS, (Lowe Farm)

Barbara and her husband Bill have farmed in the Red River Valley for more than 30 years. She also taught seasonal workers in a full-time literacy program for 12 years. Since retiring from off-farm work, she has been involved with programs for immigrant women and children and is a member of Well-Connected, an organization which assists rural families dealing with eating disorders. Barbara's second term expired on April 6, 2007.

Organization Chart



Activities

In order to carry out its advisory function, the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council members work closely with women and women's organizations throughout the province. Issues and concerns are identified through this interaction, and are brought forward for discussion at Council meetings. Recommendations are made to the Minister responsible for the Status of Women. Other avenues for bringing issues to Council's attention are:

- through members of Council who bring issues from their regions to Council meetings;
- by individuals, organizations and colleagues who identify concerns;
- by individuals who telephone the Advisory Council office seeking assistance with various concerns;
- by those invited to make presentations at Council meetings on issues related to women;
- through participation in Council-coordinated community education programs;
- through membership in the Coalition of Provincial and Territorial Advisory Councils on the Status of Women,
- perusal of relevant research; and
- through feedback from the website.

I. Meetings

In accordance with *The Manitoba Women's Advisory Council Act*, the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council held six meetings in 2006/2007. An outreach meeting was held in Thompson in conjunction with a day-long symposium, titled *Changing Needs of Rural, Northern & Remote Women in Manitoba*, organized by Rural Team Manitoba's Standing Committee on Women's Issues. Five meetings took place in Winnipeg. The dates and locations were as follows:

- □ April 22, 2006 in Winnipeg
- □ September 23, 2006 in Winnipeg
- □ October 19, 2006 in Thompson
- □ March 3, 2007 via conference call
- □ March 17, 2007 in Winnipeg
- □ March 18, 2007 in Winnipeg

II. Priorities

The Council tracks and addresses ongoing and current issues that affect the lives of women and their families. Council prioritized five areas upon which to focus its work:

- women's health and wellness
- the economic status of women (women living in poverty)
- violence against women and girls
- child care
- women in conflict with the law

Examples of Council's work on priority issues:

1. Women's health and wellness

- Lunch & Learn Today's Women and Preventing HIV/AIDS and Gender and HIV/AIDS: The Global is Local were the titles of two of Council's community information sessions focusing on women's health.
- Advisory Notes/Memos Council brought forward to the Minister such issues as: women and HIV/AIDS in Manitoba, and research on women and HIV/AIDS.
- Information gathering and dissemination Council attended the Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba's community discussion on mental health, a Disordered Eating Seminar and a Town Hall on Medicare by the Women's Health Clinic.
- Collaboration Council members and/or the Executive Director attended meetings with the Canadian Women's Health Network and Women's Health Clinic to discuss current women's issues and opportunities for collaboration.

2. Economic status of women/poverty issues

- Lunch & Learn Poverty/economic status was the theme of Council's community information sessions, which dealt with the following topics:
- Women's Equality and the Canadian Human Rights Act
- Powers of Attorney, Health Care Directives and Wills: Tools for personal and financial planning
- Twenty Years Later Has the Charter Made a Difference to Manitoba Women?
- Advisory Notes/Memos Council brought forward to the Minister such issues as: poverty in Manitoba, women and agricultural policy, the changing needs of rural, remote and northern women, the drafting of a gender-neutral Manitoba Food Charter, the declining state of Lake Winnipeg and the imperative for action to restore its water quality and sustainability.
- Collaboration Council met with a staff representative of the North End Women's Centre's Money and Women Project to discuss strategic action and the future of this project.

The Council is part of a cross sectoral committee, led by the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg and Campaign 2000, which organized a day-long workshop on poverty and people with disabilities.

Women in Action – Council participated in the development of this group, which raised awareness about budget cuts, office closures and change of mandate to Status of Women Canada, as well as the need for safe, affordable, accessible housing for women and their families.

CIDA China Project – Council met with a delegation of women from Beijing who visited Manitoba to learn about government gender initiatives in rural Manitoba.

UNIFEM Local to Global 2007 fundraiser – This event focused on Women Building Peace, presented by Dr. Margaret Fulton.

3. Violence against women and girls

- Lunch & Learn Council hosted sessions on Information on Protection Orders: *The Domestic Violence and Stalking Act* One Year After Amendments and on the Domestic Violence Intervention Unit.
- Round Table Discussion and Resource Sharing Sessions on Violence Prevention: Programs and Services for Girls and Young Women Council held a meeting of service providers, women's organizations, researchers and relevant government departments.
- Media Awareness Initiative About Sexually Exploited Youth (MAISEY) –
 Council is a founding member of this committee of individuals working directly
 with, or concerned about, sexually exploited youth and the media's portrayal of
 this issue. Council assisted with the development of a media resource for contacts
 to discuss the situation of sexually exploited youth.
- Community participation Council attended the Silent Witness Program Memorial, the launch of the Stop Sex With Kids initiative, the Take Back the Night March, the Silent Vigil for the Sisters in Spirit Campaign, a human trafficking panel discussion, a workshop on youth and gangs, two Native Women Transition Centre day-long forums on the incidence of sexual victimization among Aboriginal women and the launch of Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre's self-defense courses. Council's former Chairperson was a guest speaker at the Congress of Black Women Manitoba Chapter's panel discussion on domestic violence.
- Sunrise Memorial Council hosted its tenth annual Sunrise Memorial on the anniversary date of the Montreal Massacre. This year's memorial involved students from the University of Manitoba and featured the Silent Witness Project, which depicts silhouettes of women who died as a result of their partner's violence. The Council distributed donated toys to women's shelters.

4. Child care and related issues

- Child Care Regulatory Review Committee Council has participated on this committee since it was established in 1996 to advise the Minister of Family Services and Housing about childcare.
- Information gathering and dissemination Council brought to the Minister's attention formal recommendations to the Minister of Family Services and Housing by the Childcare Regulatory Review Committee to enhance childcare in this province, in view of the cancellation of federal funding under the 2005 Early Learning and Child Care agreement.

5. Women in conflict with the law/incarcerated women

- Ongoing collaboration Council met with senior Justice officials to discuss the new women's correctional facility.
- *Criminalizing Women*, a newly published critical feminist analysis of the situation of incarcerated women, was the focus of a Roundtable presentation by Elizabeth Comack, Professor, University of Manitoba.

III. Presentations

The Council heard from individuals and groups in the community on a variety of topics of interest to women and their families. These presentations inform the Council of current issues, programs and research and enhance its advisory capacity to government. Presentations included:

- A day-long symposium on October 19, 2006 in Thompson, titled *Changing Needs of Rural, Northern and Remote Women in Manitoba*, hosted by Rural Team Manitoba's Standing Committee on Women's Issues, which focused on the committee's 2005 research report and the identification of knowledge gaps.
- A presentation on March 18, 2007 titled *An Overview of Manitoba Housing* by Gaethorne Burns.

IV. Partnerships

Some of Council's community partnerships involved Chairing the Coalition of Provincial and Territorial Advisory Councils on the Status of Women; participating in the Legal Education & Action Fund (LEAF) Breakfast Fundraiser; point of ticket sales for UNIFEM's Local to Global Fundraiser; member of: Rural Team Manitoba and it's Standing Committee on Women's Issues; Selection Committee for the Winnipeg Citizens Hall of Fame; the Child Care Regulatory Review Committee; the Media Awareness Initiative about Sexually Exploited Youth (MAISEY); the Poverty Coalition; UNPAC's Wise Women's Committee and the Women in Action group.

V. Issues and Recommendations

As a result of Council's research and interactions with communities, issues of concern were identified and studied, and recommendations made to the Minister. The issues addressed included: accessible, safe, affordable housing for older women; growing retention and integration of immigrant women; income security; health and wellness; HIV/Aids; needs of rural and northern women; violence and the Media; child care; correctional services and justice issues; human trafficking; gender-based analysis; child support policies; social inclusion.

Community Involvement

I. Liaison

The Council worked with, provided support services to, and maintained ties with more than 800-900 women's groups, community organizations, relevant government agencies and service providers.

II. Support Services to the Community

- **Provision of a One-Stop Community Resource Library**. The Council continued to provide a professionally catalogued inventory of relevant resource material on issues of concern to women for community use.
- Provision of Support Services to the Community. The Council continued to provide
 meeting room space and on-site assistance with photocopying, mailing and faxing to
 non-profit, equality-seeking women's organizations and community members at no
 cost.
- **Provision of Information and Referrals to the Community**. The Council supported women who e-mail or phone the office with personal issues or questions by offering appropriate information and referral sources to facilitate solutions of their problems.
- **Provision of a Weekly List of Up-Coming Community Events**. The Council compiled Council Currents, a weekly calendar of events and other items of interest to women, which is faxed or e-mailed to almost 1,000 organizations and interested individuals, as well as to several community-based networks. This unique publication is also available on Council's interactive website.
- *Sponsorship of Community Events*. The Council continued to provide limited sponsorship to community-based events.
- *Participation in the Community*. The Council supported relevant community activities by attendance at more than 250 community events, conferences and meetings. These included participation in numerous fundraising events, open houses, workshops and annual general meetings hosted by women's organizations, as well as relevant community recognition awards ceremonies.
- Enhanced Interactive Web Site. The web site provides two-way communication for users to request information via e-mail, as well as linkages to resources listed in the electronic bilingual version of Parenting on Your Own: A Handbook For One-Parent Families and in Council Currents. This electronic venue has expanded Council's informational role to the community.
- Consultative Support. The Council serves in a consultative capacity on multidisciplinary steering committees and as an information resource for colleagues and peers, community-driven events, equality-seeking organizations, research, academia and strategic action, locally, nationally and, occasionally, at the international level.

Future Directions

Each year the Council identifies priority areas of concern to women and their families during a strategic planning session to determine an annual workplan. In 2006/2007, the Council focused on women's economic security, women's health and well-being, community liaison, outreach to rural and northern communities, women in conflict with the law, child care, and violence against women and girls. As we look ahead, Council will communicate with the Minister to identify and set future priorities.

Publications

Reports:

• Annual Report 2005 - 2006

Others:

- Parenting on Your Own: A Handbook For One-Parent Families: Seventh Edition - March 2006
- Manitoba Women's Advisory Council: A Voice for Manitoba Women: Brochure on the Advisory Council - March, 2007

Financial Statements

March 31, 2007

Cheryl J. Reid

Certified General Accountant Professional Corporation 110 - 1600 Ness Avenue Winnipeg, Manitoba R3J 3W7 Phone: (204) 784-4590

Fax: (204) 784-4599 Email: cherylreid@mts.net

Auditor's Report

To the Council Members of: Manitoba Women's Advisory Council

I have audited the statement of operations of the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council for the year ended March 31, 2007. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council's management. My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit.

I conducted my audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that I plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In my opinion these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the operations of the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council for the year ended March 31, 2007 and the results of its operations and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Prior year comparative figures have been prepared by another firm of public accountants.

July 16, 2007 Winnipeg, Manitoba

Certified General Accountant

Statement of Operations Year Ended March 31, 2007

	2007	2007	2006
	Budget	Actual	Actual
Revenue			
Budget appropriation	323,400	323,400	313,600
Expenditure			
Salaries & employee benefits	219,300	224,576	205,713
Other expenditures	104,100	92,660	106,269
•	323,400	317,236	311,982
Unexpended expenditure appropriation		6,164	1,618

Notes to the Financial Statements Year Ended March 31, 2007

1. Purpose of the organization

The purpose of the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council is to advance the goal of equal participation of women in society and to promote changes in social, legal, and economic structures to that end.

The appointed Council consists of a chairperson and up to eighteen members selected from a variety of geographic, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Effective June 2004, The Manitoba Women's Advisory Council's financial reporting and approval accountability are directed by the Minister of Labour and Immigration.

2. Significant accounting policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. Outlined below are those policies considered particularly significant for the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council.

a) Revenue recognition

Revenue is recognized when the budget sub-appropriation is approved by the passing of the annual *Appropriation Act* by the Manitoba Legislature.

b) Measurement uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of certain assets and liabilities at the date of financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

3. Budget appropriation

On February 26, 2007, the current budget appropriation figures were amended to reflect the transfer of budget authority from the Manitoba Enabling Appropriations in accordance with Section 33 of *The Financial Administration and Consequential Amendments Act*, to provide for general salary increases (GSI) 2006-07.

The Manitoba Women's Advisory Council's sub-appropriation budget for Salaries and employee benefits of \$216,800 was amended to \$219,300, net increase of \$2,700.

Schedule of Expenditure Year Ended March 31, 2007

	2007	2007 Actual	2006 Actual
(1.144.70)	Budget		
Salaries & employee benefits			
Managerial	74,000	75,128	73,438
Professional/Technical	48,400	48,914	44,319
Administrative support	74,900	78,879	68,280
Employee benefits	22,000	21,655	19,676
	219,300	224,576	205,713
Other expenditures			
Personnel services	20,000	8,627	13,207
Transportation	9,700	10,791	6,005
Communication	15,900	13,818	18,575
Supplies and services	34,300	34,303	35,573
Capital	1,500	4,276	10,771
Other operating	22,700	20,845	22,138
	104,100	92,660	106,269
	323,400	317,236	311,982