Fort Macleod Early Learning & Childcare Society

Fort Macleod Early Learning & Childcare Society
Board Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, September 3, 2026 @ 1:00 PM   Location: Virtual (Google Meet)

In attendance: Mackenzie Hengerer (President), Laura Yunick (Treasurer), Keeley Odney (Secretary), Lee Holfeld, Jesse Syrowitz, Brianna Wolstoncroft (Executive Director, present for portion of meeting noted below)

Regrets: None

1. Call to Order

1.a. Meeting called to order by Mackenzie Hengerer at 1:01 PM.

1.b. Confirmation of quorum was made.

1.c. The agenda was reviewed as presented.

Motion to approve the September 2026 agenda as presented made by Jesse Syrowitz, seconded by Laura Yunick. ***Outcome: Carried.***

2. Approval of Previous Minutes

2.a. Review of the July 21, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes. No meeting was held in August 2026.

2.b. No amendments were requested.

Motion to approve the July 21, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes as presented made by Laura Yunick, seconded by Keeley Odney. ***Outcome: Carried.***

3. Executive & Officer Updates

3.a. President's Report

- The President reported on an Alberta Government partnership funding model item, currently in progress; a follow-up meeting is scheduled for the following calendar week.
- The President outlined bylaw language required to support the Society's CRA charitable status application, to be addressed further under New Business.
- The Society's 360-degree program review was completed, with positive feedback received from families. The Board discussed repeating the review at three months and again at one year as an ongoing practice for the new Kinder Roots program.
- A donor recognition sign is in progress, before printing and installation on the fence line.

3.b. Secretary's Report

- The compliance binder is being maintained with copies of Alberta Government wage top-up statements, receipts, and related documentation.
- Laura Yunick and Keeley Odney completed the banking resolution and now both hold debit cards on the Society's account.
- The Secretary identified two bylaw amendments required before the Society can apply to the CRA for charitable status: (1) ratifying affordable, quality child care and food programming as the Society's first area of focus, and (2) a post-secondary partnership as its second area of focus. As the Society's bylaws require 21 days' notice for bylaw amendments, and an Annual General Meeting (AGM) is separately due in September (one year since incorporation), the Board agreed to address both amendments at the AGM.

Motion to direct the Secretary to issue notice of, and schedule, the Society's Annual General Meeting for September 2026, at which the proposed bylaw amendments will be presented for a 75% special resolution vote, made by Lee Holfeld, seconded by Laura Yunick. ***Outcome: Carried.***

- Fundraising initiative: Keeley proposed a Donut fundraiser, open to the wider community, running approximately three weeks across September and October. The product is Canadian-made and peanut-free, with a fun fall-themed spin following whoop-up days. The Board agreed by consensus to proceed. No formal motion was taken, as no specific dollar amount was being allocated at this time.

3.c. Executive Director's Report

- Enrollment: no new admissions in August; one child withdrew (family relocated out of community), bringing enrollment to 13 by month end. One new child started September 1 (part-time), bringing current enrollment to 14.
- The program's new strollers that were donated are in regular use for community walks; minor repairs are needed on one of them (replacement straps, one wheel on the larger 6-seater stroller).
- Two fire drills were completed.
- The program has been accepted into the ARCQE Curriculum Framework Supports program. The ED registered for the SCP training stream (11 weeks); staff will apply for the related PSP stream (6 weeks). Starting in January, an ARCQE consultant will provide on-site support of approximately 4 hours per month for the first two years of the three-year program to the Kinder Roots program.
- A meeting with the new licensing officer was proposed, so that all staff, including those who have not yet been through a licensing visit, can hear licensing expectations directly. A new licensing officer has been assigned to our program/area of Fort Macleod.
- Staffing concern: one educator who came in to cover the summer months has returned to her full-time school-year role, and is now available afternoons and Fridays only. A second educator has also taken on a full-time role in another industry elsewhere. Together this leaves the program without backup coverage when a staff member calls in sick. The Executive Director requested support to hire one additional full-time staff member (level 2) and one casual or floater staff member, and will follow up with Anya at Hand in Hand regarding their staffing model and availability/supports to Kinder Roots hours.
- Waitlist update: the waitlist is currently showing 13, with a few new inquiries recently received that would bring it close to 15. Most recent additions are infants, with September or October start dates.

4. Treasurer's Report

- Laura presented a combined report covering July and August 2026, as no meeting was held in August.
- Total income for July and August combined: $40,273.05. Total expenses for the same period: $49,489.72, resulting in a net operating loss of $9,216.67. Staffing wages (including CRA remittances, etc.) accounted for $41,339.00 of total expenses (83.5 percent). The increase was driven mainly by Level 1 Wages, which rose from $6,843.40 in July to $13,905.00 in August as staffing hours increased to keep pace with more enrollment.
- Bank balance as of the meeting date: approximately $47,533. A separate combined deposit of $8,014.32 was received from the Alberta Government on September 3, 2026; this deposit is not included in the balance above. Of that amount, $414.32 reconciles outstanding May 2026 program-period adjustments (Wage Top-Up, Mandatory Employer Contributions Grant, and

PGM-ECE Paid Release Time), and the remaining $7,600.00 is a Claim Advance for the September 2026 period. The Treasurer flagged the roughly four-month gap between the May program period and the September receipt of the related adjustment funds as a recurring delay to note.

- Itemized contributions received since the Kinder Roots program began: FCSS Grant $3,000 (cheque received, not yet deposited), Fort Macleod Lions $2,000, Fort Macleod Rotary – Outdoor Space $8,000, HR Advantage $8,000, and Fort Macleod Masons $500, totaling $21,500.
- The Treasurer noted these contributions are tracked cumulatively from the program's start, rather than since the last report, because the Society's total contributions must remain under the $25,000 threshold relevant to first-year charitable fundraising eligibility; this running total is important to record for the Society's charitable status planning.

Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented made by Keeley Odney, seconded by Lee Holfeld.
Outcome: Carried.

5. Old Business

5.a. Program Plan / Licensing Compliance Follow-Up

Carried over from the prior meeting: Alternate supervisor certification confirmations during the Executive Director's time away. The Board noted the recent 3-day coverage period went well.

5.b. Off-Site Activity Checklist

Carried over from the prior meeting; in progress in coordination with Anya at Hand in Hand. Walks using the program's new strollers have been ongoing.

5.c. QuickBooks Online Transition

The Society has completed its transition from Wave to QuickBooks Online for payroll and bookkeeping. The new system is working well for receipt uploads, bank matching, Board-level financial review, and audit readiness. Parent payments are being received as expected.

6. New Business

6.a. Charitable Status: Bylaw Amendments

The Board confirmed the Society's original objects/purpose clause was submitted with its bylaws at incorporation and was not filed separately with the Alberta Corporate Registry. The Board discussed ratifying the Society's core focus areas (quality child care and food programming as the first focus, and a post-secondary partnership as the second) as bylaw language required to support the Society's CRA charitable status application. Formal ratification requires a 75% special resolution and will be brought forward at the AGM (see the motion under Section 3.b). The Board also discussed dissolution-of-assets language, confirming that any related bylaw provisions would be addressed at the same time, and that the Society is not removing any existing bylaw content, only *adding clarity* on its core focus.

6.b. Security Camera System Approval

The President presented pricing for an indoor/outdoor camera system through Lorex's non-profit program: three outdoor cameras with audio and smart motion detection, four indoor cameras with smart motion detection, and an 18-day recorder, totaling $1,070.92 after a $500 non-profit discount. Installation is being sourced separately as an in-kind donation (tentatively through an approved Electrical group).

Motion to approve the purchase of the Lorex camera system through the Lorex non-profit program, with installation costs to be sourced separately, made by Laura Yunick, seconded by Keeley Odney. ***Outcome: Carried.***

6.c. Alberta Government Partnership / Portage College Update

The President reported on a signed Letter of Agreement with Portage College for an Early Learning Certificate/Diploma cohort program (12 credit courses across three semesters), tentatively beginning Winter 2027, with capacity for 25 to 50 local participants. Total program cost is $163,000, phased across three semesters, working out to roughly $6,500 per participant (per semester) depending on enrollment. The Board discussed taking a conservative approach to enrollment projections, potential funding support through the Workforce Partnership Grant stream and the Canada-Alberta Workforce Resilience Initiative. No motion was required at this time; the President will continue discussions, including a meeting with the Alberta Workforce Group the following week. Our goal is to subsidize this programming to meet rural needs, and remove financial barriers to the program for the Fort Macleod ECE community.

6.d. Community Foundation Grant Opportunity

The President reported on a Community Foundation of Southwestern Alberta information session she attended. Two relevant funding streams were identified: a Community Priorities Grant and a rural grant. Both require partnership with a registered charity, since the Society is not yet charitable. The President has reached out to a local charitable organization to gauge interest in acting as that charitable partner ahead of the October 15, 2026 deadline, and will explore other options if they are unable to participate. No motion was required; informational item.

6.e. AGM Planning

The President proposed holding the Annual General Meeting on the evening of either September 28 or September 29, 2026 (September 30 was ruled out due to Truth and Reconciliation Day). The AGM will be offered both in-person and virtually to support accessibility. Board members were asked to confirm their availability for the two proposed dates. No motion was taken; date to be confirmed and posted.

6.f. Hand in Hand Collaboration Update

The Board noted that the Executive Director and Anya (Hand in Hand Childcare Services) have met to continue their ongoing training and professional development collaboration. No further action required at this time.

7. In Camera Session

7.a. The Board moved into an in-camera session at approximately 1:50 PM. Non-voting staff were excused for this portion of the meeting. In camera discussion is not recorded in these minutes.

7.b. The Board concluded the in-camera session and **resumed the regular meeting at 2:09 PM.**

Coming out of camera, the Board agreed to the following, effective Tuesday, September 8, 2026:

- The Society will post for a full-time Level 2 Early Childhood Educator position, based on incoming enrollment of younger infants and needs of the program.
- The Society will sub-contract Hand in Hand Childcare Services to provide supervisory support to the Kinder Roots program, supporting both the Executive Director and staff. This support will focus on programming, licensing education, structured staff meetings, and professional development (in conjunction with the Hand in Hand team); shadow opportunities where Hand in Hand staff support newer ECEs on-site, and where Kinder Roots ECEs shadow at Wild Roots;

and a broader lens of compliance, education, and supporting the growth of Level 1 staff toward higher certification.
- A formal agreement will be put in place between Hand in Hand Childcare Services and the Fort Macleod Early Learning & Childcare Society. Appropriate licensing items (visitor logs, ECE records, vulnerable sector and background checks) will be kept on-site at all locations involved, to support the cross-training arrangement.
- Anya will lead the Hand in Hand initiatives under this arrangement.
- The Board will also address higher administrative hours recorded from the ED role from the summer months, to help ensure the sustainability of wages relative to outcomes achieved at Kinder Roots.

No formal motion was taken on this item; recorded as a Board consensus decision. This supersedes the discussion held in camera; ***no in camera discussion is recorded here.***

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Mackenzie Hengerer.

Outcome: Carried.

The meeting adjourned at 2:10 PM, September 3, 2026.

Unapproved Meeting Minutes Prepared by: Secretary

Date prepared: September 3, 2026