

NOVALIS HOUSE - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MANAGER'S REPORT – 21st NOVEMBER 2020

Good Morning. A very big welcome to you all, Members of the Board, Family Members and Members of Staff – Thank you for attending our AGM.

Unfortunately, under this new normal we find ourselves in, our residents and day workers will not be attending this year.

Jonathan Ballett – Acting Chairman	Nomvula Nkabinde - Treasurer
Ephraim Lukoto - Secretary	Philemon Komane - Board Member
Elinor Kern - Board Member	Clive Smedmor - Board Member
Phil Hall - Board Member	Karen Martin - Board Member

When looking back at the AGM report from last year, the closing sentence was that “much work had to be done and that we look forward to an exciting year of positive growth in 2020”. How different things turned out to be.

During the Financial Year Under Review - April 2019 - March 2020, we saw the completion of our new dining hall building. Once all the installations were completed and compliance certificates issued the old kitchen was moved from the Main House to the new building.

There were also extensive improvements made to the property

- The pool area and paving in front of the new dining hall was extended to create a recreational space and braai area.
- The old “temporary workshop” building was used to establish the new charity shop.
- The old store rooms were renovated for offices for the bookkeeper and social worker, and for staff accommodation.
- Much time was spent on general maintenance and upgrading of houses, cleaning up the property and enhancing the gardens.

THE DAY PROGRAMME

The recreational area of the dining hall was sectioned off with movable walls to create a work area. Despite the upheaval of the move, it was a very busy year in the workshop, resulting in contract sales of R 198 799.00

The Bespoke Amenities Co – Packaging of shower caps	42 150.00
Calibre Plastics (Pty) Ltd -Assembly of tap connectors	30 611.53
Kia Motors Presentation baskets - (Production Costs – R 6 172)	9 500.00
Nedbank Ltd - Mailing	4 793.10
Plastpro Scientific (Pty) Ltd – Assembly of sample bottles/test tubes	111 744.20
GRAND TOTAL	198 798.83

The workshop programme not only provides training in occupational and life skills but gives each one a sense of purpose and self-worth, by creating a sense of being part of a business and commercial environment.

The school leavers from Unity College continued to attend the workshop for “work experience” on Tuesdays.

Other therapeutic activities were enjoyed to diversify the day programme.

HANDWORK, KNITTING, PUZZLES, CARD MAKING, READING STORIES, STORYTELLING AND PHYSICAL EXERCISES.

THE RESIDENCE continued to provide full time care to 24 residents.

New routines had to be established, as meals were being prepared and served in the new communal dining room, and not in the individual houses as before.

Change can be very challenging to both beneficiaries and staff, but with perseverance, persuasion and support, the new routines succeeded.

STAFF TRAINING

Sina Nkwe, besides her role of workshop manager, also supported the residential programme, by providing guidance and “in house” support and training to the care staff, as she continues to live in from Mondays to Thursdays.

PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES continued with Karen Martin, who consulted with us on a weekly basis until August last year, when we welcomed our full time Social Work Manager, Lennon Chikumbirike. Lennon’s appointment strengthened our management team, and provided strong support for the sometimes challenging situations that can be faced in this work.

NURSING SERVICES

We welcome our nursing sister, Irene Cowley, to our team. Irene was until recently the nursing manager at Logwood Village, and has made herself available for consultations when needed.

Her work at Novalis includes:

- Overseeing the administration and record keeping of all medication
- Advice in medical care for beneficiaries when necessary
- Referrals to doctors and clinics
- Staff Training

SPECIAL DAYS

- May 19 – Outing to Mogales Gate Nature Reserve – Lions Club of Midrand
- June 19 - Barnyard Theatre – Abba and Queen Show for Basil Malcomess’s 40th birthday. The outing was sponsored by Basil’s two sisters.
- July 19 - Novartis Pharmaceuticals – Mandela Day Tea Party for all residents and day workers.
- August 19 - Regional Eisteddfod Event at Westbury Recreation Centre
- 23rd November 2019 – Unified Games – Shumbashaba
- 26th November 2019 – Cresset House Concert
- 30th November – DSD Sports Event at the Vaal University of Technology
- In December Amy Tsaperas arranged a “year-end celebration” and handed out gift bags to all the beneficiaries and staff
- A very successful “**Year End Party**” was held on the 6th December 2019. The braai was provided by the Lions Club of Midrand, for the Novalis beneficiaries. Once again our good friend Paul Thompson provided the Ice Cream Van, and the gifts for the beneficiaries were sponsored by Paul Thompson, Jonny’s Restaurant and Puleng Technologies
- At the **Year End Party** Long Service Awards were given out to eight staff members who have served for over 10 years
- **Valentine’s Day** was celebrated with a special event, exchanging of gifts, a photo shoot and a party.

FUNDING:

We thank the DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT for their continued support.

THE SUBSIDY received April 2019 to March 2020

- R 302 142 - WORKSHOP
- R 993 972 – RESIDENCE

Our sincere thanks and appreciation goes to all the funders and donors who continue to support us in the work we do.

DONATIONS - 1st April 2019 - 31st March 2020 – R 304 650

Hamish and Lorna Riddet	7 780
Rivonia Bowling Club	800
Elinor Kern	4 000
Ladies Bridge Club Waterfall	2 000
Waterfall Management Company	10 000
Carlswald North Estate	620
Waterfall Residents Association	2 650
Glenda Rodd	3 000
Jonny's Restaurant	3 000
Paul Thompson	3 900
G. Korner	2 000
Dept of Environmental Health	1 100
R. B. Hagart Trust	250 000
Fuchs Foundation	10 000
Modo Match - E. Kern	3 800
TOTAL	304 650

FUND RAISING - 1st April 2019 - 31st March 2020 – R 120 315

Thanks to a donation of R 3000 from Glenda Rodd, and with help from Eric and Marilyn Taylor, the Charity Shop was laid out and officially opened on the 26th April last year.

Charity Shop Sales	105 238	
Re-Cycling	1 840	
My Village - Supporters	7 737	
Christmas Cake Raffle – Marion Rodd	5 500	Sincere thanks to Marion for baking a cake again for the raffle this year.
TOTAL	120 315	

POST BALANCE SHEET DONATIONS RECEIVED:

DONATIONS - 1st April 2020 - 31st October 2020 – R 17 785

Hamish and Lorna Riddet	4 925
Rivonia Bowling Club	500
Elinor Kern	600
Felix and Carla Ernst for PPE	5 000
Lactalis (Parmalat)	5 000
Carol Klein for Staff Gifts	1 000
Anonymous	760
TOTAL	17 785

FUND RAISING - 1st April 2019 - 31st March 2020 – R 30 179

My Village Card	4 086
Charity Shop	26 093
TOTAL	30 179

The Charity Shop was closed to the public during the past seven months, but we are now able to welcome back our customers, and hope to recover some of the loss in revenue from this very successful fund raising project.

OTHER DONATIONS**REGULAR FOOD DONATIONS**

Woolworths - Crowthorne Shopping Centre	2 X per week
Woolworths - Dainfern Square	2 X per week
Carlswald Super Spar Bakery	2 X per week
Kiepersol - Fresh Fruit	
Westfalia - Fresh Fruit	
Parmalat - Yoghurt / Cheese Products	
Zu Zannahs Wild African Warehouse –Fresh Free Range Eggs	

OTHER DONATIONS

Kustom Home Furnishings	Re-upholstery of lounge furniture
Naz's Fabrics	Upholstery Materials - Alex Panas
Paul Thompson	Ice cream van and the gifts for the beneficiaries
Puleng Technologies	Gifts for the beneficiaries
Russell Thompson - Fundamental Designs	Movable walls and fitting out the accounting /admin office
Midrand Lions Club	Braai for the Christmas Party
Evergreen Turf	Instant lawn
Various Donors	Charity Shop items
Fiona Scholtz	ran the virtual Comrades Marathon and raised enough money to buy 2 new TV's
Andy Smith	Regular donations of treats for the residents dropped off at the gate during lockdown
GotGas	Regular supply of Gas
Solman Gas	Repairs to gas geyser
Beltrade	Solar Floodlight
Harriet Steenkamp	Knits Beanies and Bed Socks for winter each year
Linda and the Knitting Club	Knitted Blankets and other items for residents

FURTHER DONATIONS RECEIVED DURING THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN

Nkunzi Pharmaceuticals	masks, infrared thermometer
Margot Hodnett	cloth masks, infrared thermometer
Andy Smith	infrared thermometer
Lerato Mphefo- ward councillor	food donations/hand sanitizer
Siloam Ministries	freshly baked bread
Pick 'n Pay - San Ridge Square	Dry foods
Jasmar Coatings	face buffs, sanitizer, foggers, surface spray, sanitizer stands
Beltrade	face buffs
Irene Cowley	oximeter
Department of Social Development	PPE – gloves, masks, sanitizer, protective goggles, face shields, coveralls, theatre gowns

VOLUNTEERS

A very big “Thank you” has to be given to our regular volunteers for the continued support with our various projects.

- A very big Thank You Glenda Rodd for all your help with the Charity Shop and thank you also to the Ladies from her Bible Study Group and family and friends who help in the shop.
- **Cathy Barratt** - Charity Shop
- **Jacqui Matlala**– Charity Shop
- **Bela Broekman** – Charity Shop
- **Brain Abbott** - repairs and maintenance with the maintenance team
- **Midrand Lions Club** – Regular deliveries of donations from the Carlswald Spar bakery
- **Inge Arthur** - Music sessions – one Sunday a month
- **Church Group Members** - once a month on a Tuesday
- **Ingrid Adams** – Face Masks and sewing of cloth masks, cut out by the Novalis staff, (using fabric from items of donated clothing) (A real labour of love)
- **Eric Taylor** - Refurbishing and Maintenance of the property and fund raising
- **Merilyn Taylor** - Charity Shop, gardens, fund raising
- **Eric, Merilyn and Jayne Taylor** – Assembly work from home
- **Mike Rodd** – Contract work

OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT YEAR - MARCH TO NOVEMBER 2020

During the past seven months Novalis faced the challenges of the Covid-19 Pandemic, and how to best manage the situation, not knowing what would lie ahead. With strict health and safety protocols in place to minimize the risk of exposure to our beneficiaries and staff, our programs continued.

Some of our residents went back to their parental homes for a period of time, to wait and see what the effects of the pandemic would be.

For a time, the day workshop programme was closed down, which meant that our day workers were not able to attend.

In reaction to the spread of the virus, our programmes had to be restructured, and our residents had to forego some of their fun activities like weekly horse riding, shopping, and picnics just to mention a few.

Everyone who lived through this difficult time can attest to the challenges brought about by the sudden change to their day to day routine. For people with intellectual disabilities, routine is a major coping mechanism. With the lockdown restrictions on the movement of people, social distancing and wearing of masks, our residents had to embrace a new way of life.

Weeks turned into months, and our residents missed the physical contact with their loved ones, who were also under lockdown in their homes. During Level 5 and Level 4 lockdown, we relied on telephonic conversations and WhatsApp video calls with families and loved ones, to lessen the effect of anxiety, induced by the seemingly indefinite lockdown restrictions.

The separation from seeing families was sometimes very difficult for our people, but somehow our spirits were kept positive, and now after seven months, we look back and reflect on these times with thankfulness that everyone is well and have survived the emotional challenges of the strange times that we are in.

As the country moved to Level 3 lockdown, with the implementation of the Novalis House Corona Virus Policy, those residents who were at home were able to return to Novalis, and those who had been locked in were able to visit their families again.

NOVALIS WORKSHOP

The workshop programme was shut down on the 18th March 2020 for all day workers, in line with the directive for the closure of schools.

During Level 5 and Level 4 lockdown a small amount of contract work was received from Plastpro Scientific and Nedbank, which kept our group of sixteen residents, who remained locked in at Novalis, busy and stimulated.

Towards the end of June, with the implementation of the Policy, we were able to allow our day workers to return to the workshop programme.

In July a great deal of contract work was received from Calibre Plastics and Plastpro Scientific. This resulted in a record month, with contract sales of R28 160.

Despite the difficulties faced over the past months, the workshop continues to thrive under the expert guidance of Sina Nkwe.

The contract sales for the current financial year April 2020 to October 2020 amount to R 81 962.00

Calibre Plastics (Pty) Ltd -Assembly of tap connectors	12 446.84
Nedbank Ltd - Mailing	3 412.50
Plastpro Scientific (Pty) Ltd – Assembly of sample bottles/test tubes	66 103.00
GRAND TOTAL	81 962.34

THE NEW WORKSHOP

In order to comply with the health regulations during Covid-19, the old dining room in the Main House and the Amphitheatre is being used to provide additional work spaces.

Working in temporary work spaces is less than ideal.

It is therefore, that the planned new workshop building, which sits directly behind the dining hall, and can accommodate 100 people, is prioritized as the next big project to be undertaken.

The approved plan for the new workshop was costed out by our quantity surveyor at R 2 500 000.

We have applied to various donors for funding for this new building.

So far we have received a donation from Corobrik for all the bricks needed.

N.L.C.S.A.

An application for Funding for R 3 500 000 was submitted to the National Lotteries Commission on the 21st September 20 for:

Building of New Workshop - R 2 500 000 and Running Costs - R 1 000 000

ANNUAL SHUTDOWN

The workshop will shut down from the 18th December 20 to the 4th January 2021.

Unfortunately we will not be able to have the usual Christmas Party this year.

We will arrange a low-key internal celebration for residents, day workers and staff

The residence will remain open throughout the festive season.

NOVALIS STAFF

Without dedicated and reliable staff, an organization such as ours cannot succeed.

During the past months of Covid Lockdown it was the commitment and dedication of our staff that helped us to find a way of coping with the uncertainty and fear of what may lie ahead.

They were able to bring comfort and reassurance to our residents and an acceptance of the new way of living.

When the initial lockdown was announced, to minimize movement and to avoid using public transport, a group of our care staff and maintenance staff, committed to locking in at Novalis.

When Level 5 was extended they agreed to stay locked in for the two weeks extension.

Although the workshop was officially closed, Sina also committed to staying at Novalis during this time, to support the residents and staff, and to oversee that the safety protocols were adhered to. This commitment came at a great sacrifice to the personal lives and families of these staff members, and at the end of the initial six weeks of lockdown they were suffering from stress and burnout. When the country moved to Level 4, a shift change was made, and a new team came in to enable these staff members go home to their families.

During the past seven months, to avoid anyone using public transport, Novalis transport was provided for staff coming in on duty, and also for those going home.

Care staff and maintenance staff are currently working on two week shifts, and the Novalis transport is still currently being provided.

However, from the middle of December, as some staff go on leave, weekly shifts will be introduced. This will be continued in the New Year.

This will mean that Novalis transport can no longer be provided as it is costly and logistically unmanageable to provide on a weekly basis.

To lessen the risk of exposure, we have arranged that

- Public transport will be used “outside of peak hour”.
- Staff will be supplied with hand sanitizer and face masks.

The Corona Virus Policy for families will be amended and sent out to inform everyone of this decision. New indemnities will need to be signed.

SPECIAL THANKS

To Sina and the workshop team, Lennon our social worker, Tracy our bookkeeper, Thato, Joseph and Jeanette, the residential Team Leaders, all our care staff, our cooks and cleaners, our maintenance staff and our security staff, for their dedicated efforts and commitment, in providing a safe and happy place where our people can continue to live and work.

OUR BENEFICIARIES

Despite the challenging past months Novalis has remained a happy place.

We are truly proud of the way in which our beneficiaries have accepted the changes in their lives, however hard it may have been.

We thank them all for the way that they have continued carrying out their duties with diligence, enthusiasm and pride, excelling in their work and their achievements in the workshop programme, some even formally complaining when the work was low.

AMANDA ROODT - ACCOUNTANT

We thank Amanda Roodt, our accountant of seventeen years, for the on-going valued financial and administrative advice and support.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

I thank our Board of Directors for their firm support during the past months of anxiety and uncertainty, and for their time and ongoing commitment to serving on the Novalis board.

Your expertise, guidance, encouragement and support is immensely valued.

PARENTAL BODY

We thank you our families, for your unwavering support and co-operation during the past months.

We thank you all for your support for our various fund raising projects and events.

As the year draws to a close, we wish you all a safe and blessed festive season.

Mary Owen

General Manager