FIREFLY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES

June 18, 2025

Kenora/Microsoft Teams

PRESENT:	Debbie Larson	Kim Vares	Alisha Dasti-Hill
	Sarah-lynn Klassen	Crystal Page	Jared Ralko
	Carlynne Bell	Adrian Lizzi	
REGRETS:	Jennifer Johnson		
STAFF:	Karen Ingebrigtson	Michelle Gaudet	Jennifer Marquis
	Darcia Curtis	Kirby Parks	Jackie Hummelbrunner
	Joel Willett	Tammy Hanstead	
GUEST:	Gina Clark, Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS)		

Ms. Vares called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Bell acknowledged that at FIREFLY, we express our deep gratitude and respect for the traditional territories of the many Indigenous peoples across Ontario. We honour the rich histories, vibrant cultures, and enduring connections that First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples have to the lands and waters that surround us. We also recognize and celebrate the invaluable contributions of Indigenous children, youth, and families, whose strengths and resilience continue to enrich our communities.

At the same time, we acknowledge the historical and ongoing impacts of colonization on Indigenous families and children, including the devastating legacy of residential schools. We take responsibility for addressing these injustices and remain committed to walking alongside Indigenous communities with humility, integrity, and care.

Rooted in Northwestern Ontario, our work extends to communities across the province. We are thankful for the privilege to live and work on these lands and are dedicated to fostering meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities—built on respect, equity, and a shared commitment to reconciliation.

FIREFLY approaches this work with heart—bringing dedication, empathy, and respect to all that we do. We believe in empowerment, celebrating the strengths of those we serve and supporting their growth and confidence. Relationships are at the core of our work, and we value connection, collaboration, and understanding as essential to building strong and resilient communities.

As we move forward, we hold these truths in our hearts and embrace our shared responsibility to create a better future—one that reflects Healthy People, Resilient Families, and Vibrant Communities.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Ms. Vares shared that at the March 25, 2025 meeting of the Board of Directors, support was garnered for the establishment of an ad hoc Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee will focus on ensuring the Board and its committees have the right mix of skills, experience, and diversity to effectively fulfill their roles and responsibilities.

The Nominating Committee of the Board met on April 9 and May 20, 2025. An electronic nomination survey was distributed to all Board members garnering nominations from April 28 – May 16, 2025.

Results were collated and evaluated by the Nominating Committee based on established criteria (including but not limited to Board Skills Matrix, Board diversity and inclusion, Board Attendance Reports, real or perceived conflict of interest, Board applications etc.) at the May 20th meeting. All nominations have been confirmed and accepted.

The Nominating Committee of the Board recommends the following slate of qualified nominees to the Board of Directors for approval:

- Chair of the Board: Kim Vares
- Vice-Chair of the Board: Sarah-Lynn Klassen
- Treasurer of the Board: Jennifer Johnson
- Secretary of the Board: Nominations were opened for the position of Secretary. Debbie Larson nominated Jared Ralko. Jared Ralko let his name stand and nominations were closed. Jared Ralko was declared Secretary by acclamation.

MOTION #1 Moved by Crystal Page
Seconded by Debbie Larson
That the FIREFLY Board of Directors accepts the recommendations from the Nominating Committee for the Election of Officers and that the Board of Directors approves the recommendation as amended.
CARRIED

FIREFLY MOMENT

Ms. Ingebrigtson shared that at the FIREFLY All Staff gathering on May 28th and 29th in Kenora, she hosted a lighthearted "rummage sale," offering items from her office for staff to rehome. Staff had been notified in advance and many stopped by to chat, share stories, and pick up unique treasures, from books and photos to Churchill rocks and even an owl costume once used when daycare children trick-or-treated through the building. The event created a wonderful opportunity for connection, conversation, and well wishes, and was warmly received by staff.

REVIEW OF AGENDA

MOTION #2 Moved by Carlynne Bell
Seconded by Debbie Larson
That the agenda June 18, 2025 be accepted with addition.
CARRIED

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflict of interest was declared.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Consent agenda items:

- 2024/2025 Board meeting attendance
- May 30, 2025 FIREFLY Governance and Quality Committee Meeting Minutes
- May 30, 2025 FIREFLY Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

MOTION #3 Moved by Alisha Dasti-Hill
Seconded by Sarah-lynn Klassen
That the consent agenda of June 18, 2025 be approved.
CARRIED

ITEMS PULLED FOR DISCUSSION

None

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Fiscal Advisory

Ms. Parks shared that the Fiscal Advisory committee met earlier in the day with the Auditor, noting that Ms. Pyzer reviewed the Auditor's report including the 2024-2025 draft audited financial statements with the committee, highlighting the basis for the clean audited opinion.

CEO and LEAD AGENCY REPORT

CEO and Lead Agency Report

Ms. Ingebrigtson presented her final report to the Board. A full written report was included in the Board package for reference.

Ms. Ingebrigtson was pleased to advise that FIREFLY's grant submission for the Ontario Autism Program (OAP) Workforce Capacity funding has been renewed for an additional two years, totaling $400,000 ($200,000 per year). This critical funding will support program staffing and service delivery. The Honourable Greg Rickford, Minister of Northern Development and Indigenous Affairs, will visit FIREFLY on June 26th to make the formal funding announcement.

In closing, Ms. Ingebrigtson shared her reflections on her time with FIREFLY. She expressed deep gratitude for the privilege of serving children, youth, and families, and recognized the dedication of the Board, the Strategy and Performance Team, the leadership team, and staff across the province. She noted that FIREFLY's success has been built through collective vision, collaboration, and commitment, and expressed confidence in the future under the leadership of incoming CEO Darcia Curtis, the Board of Directors, and FIREFLY's staff.

MOTION #4 Moved by Jared Ralko
Seconded by Crystal Page
That the June 2025 CEO and Lead Agency Reports be accepted as presented.
CARRIED

FINANCE

Ms. Parks shared that the Fiscal Advisory committee met earlier in the day with the Auditor, noting that Ms. Pyzer reviewed the Auditor's report including the 2024-2025 draft audited financial statements with the committee, highlighting the basis for the clean audited opinion. Ms. Parks shared that there were no changes to the investment statements.

OPERATIONS AND CLIENT SERVICE REPORT

Ms. Willett reviewed the polar graphs with the Board, highlighting the progress made in each pillar. Ms. Willett reviewed FIREFLY highlights and on the horizon with the Board. A question and answer period followed.

MOTION # 5 Moved by Debbie Larson
Seconded by Crystal Page
That the May 2025 Operations and Client Services Report be accepted as presented.
CARRIED

QUALITY OF CARE

Ms. Ingebrigtson reviewed the Board Self-Assessment of the Governance Standards with the Board. Ms. Ingebrigtson reviewed sections 3.1.1 to 3.1.10 with the Board.

CORRESPONDENCE/READING

None

NEW BUSINESS

i. **Establish Standing Committee Members**

Membership on the Board Standing Committees was established as follows:

a. Governance and Quality Committee
Sarah-lynn Klassen, Debbie Larson, Carlynne Bell

b. Fiscal Advisory Committee
Jennifer Johnson, Adrian Lizzi, Alisha Dasti-Hill

c. Board Development Committee
Crystal Page and Jared Ralko

ii. **Signing officers**

MOTION #6 Moved by Debbie Larson
Seconded by Carlynne Bell
That the signing officers for FIREFLY's 2025-2026 Fiscal Year be:

Kim Vares, Chair
Sarah-lynn Klassen, Vice Chair
Jennifer Johnson, Treasurer
Jared Ralko, Secretary
Darcia Curtis, CEO
Jenn Marquis, Director
CARRIED

iii. 2025-2026 Meeting Dates

The proposed 2025–2026 Board and Committee meeting dates were reviewed by the Board. A question-and-answer period followed. The Board approved the proposed dates with an adjustment to the regular Board meeting start time, which will now begin at 6:00 p.m. (previously 7:00 p.m.).

Committee meeting times were also confirmed as follows: Fiscal Advisory Committee at 5:00 p.m., Governance and Quality Committee at 5:30 p.m., and Board Development Committee at 5:30 p.m. Committee meetings will continue to be held on the same day as Board meetings.

MOTION #7 Moved by Carlynne Bell
Seconded by Jared Ralko
That the proposed meeting dates schedule be accepted as amended.
CARRIED

iv. Set AGM Date

The Board agreed that the FIREFLY Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 17, 2026.

v. Board Work Plan

Ms. Vares provided an update, sharing that the Governance and Quality Committee reviewed the Board workplan and agreed to present to the Board for approval tonight. Ms. Vares shared that the Board and each committee will review the workplans, committee roles and responsibilities at the beginning of each year. A discussion followed.

MOTION #8 Moved by Crystal Page
Seconded by Jared Ralko
That the 2025-2026 FIREFLY Board of Directors workplan be accepted as presented.
CARRIED

vi. Board Evaluations and Action Plan

Ms. Vares reported that the Governance and Quality Committee reviewed the results of the annual Board evaluations and developed an accompanying action plan. Four key actions were identified for the coming year:

- Strengthening Board member recruitment
- Supporting transitions of Chief Executive Officers (CEO)
- Providing a FIREFLY funding training session for Board members
- Supplying each Board member with a laminated chart outlining FIREFLY programs and funding sources

The Committee will oversee implementation of the action plan and report back on progress throughout the year.

IN CAMERA

Motion #9 Moved by Carlynne Bell
Seconded Crystal Page
That the Board moves to in-camera at 7:57 p.m.
CARRIED

EVALUATION
Ms. Bell provided reflections at the conclusion of the meeting. The land acknowledgement, prepared by new CEO Ms. Curtis, was noted as powerful and deeply aligned with FIREFLY's values, resonating with truth and sincerity.

The overall quality of the meeting was described as very high, reflecting a standard of excellence. Meeting materials were praised as being thorough yet easy to digest, requiring approximately one hour of preparation. Special thanks were extended to Ms. Hanstead, Executive Assistant, for her organization and support in keeping Board processes running smoothly.

Presentations and reports, including the Annual Report, were highlighted as informative and well-prepared, emphasizing FIREFLY's rich history of serving children and families and the importance of the strategic plan. Board members appreciated the sense of collaboration, the opportunity to serve in new roles, and extended congratulations to Mr. Ralko on assuming the role of Secretary.

The "rummage sale" held by the retiring CEO during the FIREFLY All Staff event was remembered fondly, with staff enjoying the opportunity to connect, share stories, and select meaningful objects and memorabilia.

Heartfelt thanks were expressed to Ms. Ingebrigtson for her decade of service as CEO and for her many years of dedication to children and families of the North. The Board warmly welcomed Ms. Curtis as CEO, looking forward to a new chapter in FIREFLY's journey.

NEXT MEETING
Friday, September 26, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. Red Lake
Jennifer Johnson will provide the Land acknowledgement and evaluation for the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT
Having no further business, the Chairperson accepted a motion to adjourn at 8:10 p.m.

T Hanstead

Tammy Hanstead
Recorder

September 26, 2025
Date

Kim Vares

Kim Vares
Chairperson

September 26, 2025
Date