

Premier's Council on Disabilities

Annual Report
2020-2021



Premier's Council on Disabilities

Conseil du premier ministre pour les
personnes handicapées

2020-2021 Annual Report

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September 2022

The Honourable Blaine Higgs
Premier
Province of New Brunswick
P. O. Box 6000
Fredericton, N.B.
E3B 5H1

Dear Premier:

We are pleased to submit the annual report of the Premier's Council on Disabilities for April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Randy Dickinson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R".

Randy Dickinson
Chairperson

Message from the Chairperson and the Executive Director

We are pleased to submit the 2020-2021 annual report of the Premier's Council on Disabilities.

The 2020-21 year was an unprecedented and unique experience for everyone. Collectively, we continue forward to recovery after the immense challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council and Staff have navigated the challenges of the pandemic while working together to find new ways of connecting with each other, clients, partners, and the community.

From the onset of the pandemic, the Council has provided advice and recommendations to the Government of New Brunswick on how to ensure persons with disabilities are not faced with additional barriers in accessing COVID-19 related information or programs.

Throughout the pandemic, the Council has continued delivering on its mission of "A New Brunswick where all persons are accepted, included and valued." Transitioning to virtual events allowed the Council to once again take a leadership role in celebrating Disability Awareness Week (DAW) and host an online event marking the United Nations Day for Persons with a Disability.

In addition, in July 2020, after an extensive consultation process, the Council released **New Brunswick's Disability Action Plan for Persons with a Disability: Accountable Path Forward to an Equal Opportunity!** The Disability Action Plan (DAP) is a multi-year strategy that includes recommendations with a focus on employment, education, poverty, housing, disability supports, accessibility, transportation, recreation, and wellness.

The Council will hold the government accountable by monitoring the progress made in implementing the recommendations through regular public updates.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all Council members and Staff for their ongoing dedication, expertise, and passion towards the work of the Council in these uncertain times.



Randy Dickinson
Chairperson

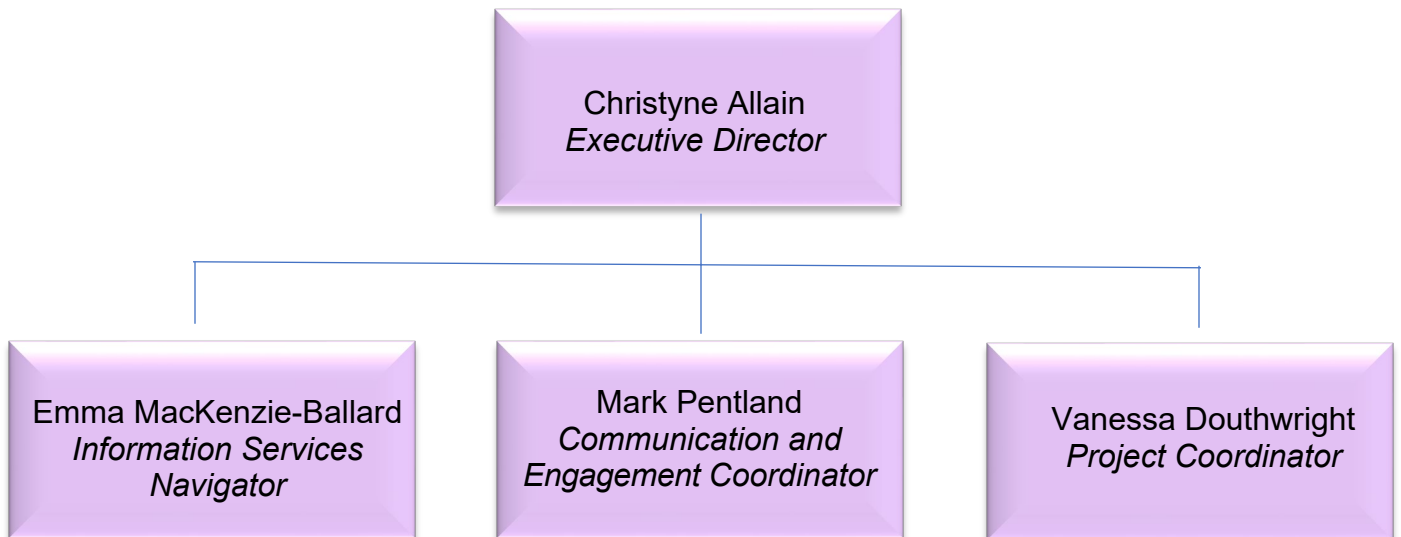


Christyne Allain,
Executive Director

Council Members 2020-2021

Randy Dickinson	Chairperson
Sam Harrison	Regional Representative (Moncton Region)
Kailah Winter-Smith	Provincial Agency Representative
Patrick Losier	Public-at-Large Representative
Christine Evans	Regional Representative (Saint John Region)
Nick Taggart	Regional Representative (Fredericton Region)
Linda Ferrier	Public-at-Large Representative
Marc LeBlanc	Regional Representative (Bathurst Region)
Michael George	Regional Representative (Saint John Region)
Angèle Collette	Regional Representative (Moncton Region)
Michèle Ouellette	Regional Representative (Edmundston Region)
Annie Chiasson Doiron	Provincial Agency Representative
Gregory Zed	Regional Representative (Rothesay Region)

PCD Personnel 2020-2021



In addition, please note that the following persons served on the staff of the PCD during some portion of 2020-2021:

Vanessa Douthwright Information Services Navigator

Vision: A New Brunswick where all persons are accepted, included and valued.

Mission: We provide dynamic leadership to improve the quality of life for all persons affected by disability in New Brunswick.

We accomplish this by:

- Being a strong voice and role model for full community participation;
- Providing research, advice and direction to the Premier and Government;
- Educating and increasing public awareness and the profile of individual rights, abilities and values;
- Building strategic partnerships and networks;
- Facilitating support for individuals, families, caregivers, professionals and communities.

Mandate

The Premier's Council on Disabilities is a body for consultation, study and information sharing, which was created to advise the provincial government on matters relating to the status of persons with disabilities. The Council reports directly to the Premier of New Brunswick.

During a large provincial conference in the fall of 1981, which involved many persons with disabilities, parents, organizations serving persons with disabilities and government representatives, it was decided that a permanent body was needed to maintain the momentum generated by the International Year of Disabled Persons. The unanimous resolution of the conference prompted provincial legislation to be drafted and passed that created the Premier's Council in 1982.

The Premier's Council on Disabilities Act states that the Council shall:

- Advise the Minister on matters relating to the status of disabled persons;
- Bring before the government and the public matters of interest and concern to disabled persons;
- Promote:
 - prevention of disabling conditions,
 - employment opportunities of disabled persons, and
 - access by persons with disabilities to all services offered to the citizens of New Brunswick.

The Council in carrying out its functions may:

- Receive and hear petitions and suggestions from individuals and groups concerning the status of disabled persons;
- Undertake research on matters relevant to the status of disabled persons and recommend research areas that can be studied by governments, voluntary associations, private business, and universities;
- Recommend programs concerning the status of disabled persons;
- Make referrals to, consult and collaborate with, government agencies, voluntary associations, private business, universities and individuals on matters which affect the status of disabled persons;
- Appoint committees consisting of members and other persons who are not members of the Council;
- Propose legislation, policies and practices to improve the status of disabled persons; and,
- Publish the reports, studies and recommendations that the Council considers necessary.

Highlights from 2020-2021

Disability Action Plan (DAP) - *Accountable Path Forward to an Equal Opportunity!*

Disability issues are complex. They affect the lives of nearly every person in New Brunswick whether those people are disability consumers, family members, or friends. Disability issues are increasingly having an impact in people's everyday lives as the population ages.

In 2020, the Premier's Council assumed the coordinating role for the Disability Action Plan (DAP). The DAP included 43 recommendations designed to respond to issues identified by key stakeholders during the Disability Summit and workshops during the previous Disability Awareness Week.

The resulting Disability Action Plan is a multi-year strategy that includes recommendations with a focus on employment, education, poverty, housing, disability supports, accessibility, transportation, recreation and wellness.

The Premier's Council will continue to work closely with the Office of the Premier and GNB departments, through the creation of the DAP Interdepartmental Committee. Stakeholders will also be consulted for ways to fulfill all recommendations put forth, to improve the lives of persons with a disability.

Disability Awareness Week October 4th to 10th, 2020 – *Accessibility is the Future!*

Disability Awareness week is held annually to conduct a strategic public awareness campaign to promote enhanced supports for persons with disabilities of all types and of all ages. The campaign this year included virtual events, social media, radio, public service announcements, news releases, and posters to promote DAW virtually.

Disability Awareness Week relies heavily on collaboration of staff and volunteers from

the Neil Squire Society who work with the Premier's Council to stage the many activities during this week. The activities this year included a kick-off event on October 4th in Tracadie co-hosted by Vie Autonome Péninsule Acadienne Inc, a virtual presentation to public schools and to residents of New Brunswick, and the annual provincial Walk and Roll event. The Walk and Roll event also took place virtually, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

During DAW 2020, Olivia Lipton was named recipient of the Randy Dickinson Scholarship. This \$2000 scholarship is awarded annually to a New Brunswick student with a disability studying in a recognized program at a New Brunswick post-secondary education institution.

Canadian Tire Oromocto received the Council's Employer Recognition Award for their employing participants of Training and Employment Centres through the supported employment program. Erica Young, Executive Director of Opal Family Services of Fredericton, received the Provincial Award for demonstrating an unwavering dedication to fostering inclusion in her community. Lastly, Lynn LeBlanc, Executive Director of New Brunswick Deaf and Hard of Hearing Service Inc., received the Honourable Andy Scott Award. Lynn is actively involved with cross-disability organizations as a board member and stakeholder and is a strong community advocate for persons with disabilities.

United Nations International Day for Persons with a Disability – December 3, 2020

Annually, the Premier's Council hosts an event on Dec. 3 in recognition of the United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The theme in 2020 was ***Building Back Better: toward a disability-inclusive, accessible and sustainable post COVID-19 World.***

The International Day of Persons with Disabilities was first proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1992. Over the years, UN day events have been organized around the world to encourage people, organizations, governments, and societies to focus on issues related to the inclusion of persons with a disability and the measures needed to support greater equity.

This year's event was hosted virtually on Zoom, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and featured guest speakers Randy Dickinson, chairperson of the Premier's Council on Disabilities, Gary Birch, Executive Director of Neil Squire Society (NSS), and Rachelle Bernier, Rehabilitation Engineer at the Stan Cassidy Centre for Rehabilitation. Gary Birch spoke about the creation of the NSS and the work they do with Makers Making Change. Rachelle Bernier discussed the work done at the Stan Cassidy Centre and how the tools created by Makers Making Change help their clients in rehabilitation. The event concluded with a small group of people building switches, by virtual instruction led by NSS. These switches were then donated to the Stan Cassidy Centre for clients to use.

Council Board Meetings

Throughout 2020-2021 Council held quarterly meetings to address a variety of topics relating to persons with a disability, such as:

- Supports for students with disabilities in the education system
- Financial support for persons with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Mental health issues
- Deaf Awareness Week and masks
- Disability Action Plan
- Accessible Elections
- Worksafe NB

Clients

During this year, staff responded to over 290 requests from individuals with a disability, parents, teachers, rehabilitation professionals, and advocates. These requests were received mostly through telephone and email, with some in-person meetings at the beginning of 2020. The largest percentage of inquiries came from persons living with a disability or their immediate family members. Primarily, PCD staff assisted clients in finding the appropriate programs and services to assist in meeting their needs.

The PCD also maintains online information directories that encompass programs and services available to persons with a disability. The many categories include, but are not limited to: sports, recreation, and leisure resources; transportation services; vehicle retrofit programs; and financial aid.

PCD Meetings, Presentations, Collaboration with Government

- *Office of the Premier (ED)*
 - Discussed next steps for the Disability Action Plan and Accessibility Legislation.
 - Meeting with the Deputy Chief of Staff
 - Presentation to the Premier of the Disability Action Plan
- *Executive Council Office*
 - Worked with ECO on the upcoming council appointments
- *Department of Social Development*
 - Meeting with representatives from this department to discuss the new Disability Action Plan
 - Participation at a two-day training, organized by the Department of Social Development on the Disability Support Program. As part of the training, a staff member did a presentation on the work of the Premier's Council on Disabilities.

- Worked with the department on supports for persons with a disability during the pandemic.
- *Post-Secondary, Education, Training and Labour*
 - Attended two meetings of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) technical review working group.
 - Many meetings with representatives from this department to discuss the Disability Action Plan, Disability Awareness Week, committees, and for their feedback on programs and services available to persons with disabilities
- *Department of Health*
 - Meeting regarding the Disability Action Plan
- *Department of Education and Early Childhood Development*
 - Meeting of the Enhanced Support Worker Program (ESWP) design guiding team.
 - Public consultation session hosted by the Minister on the Department's Green Paper on education.
 - Meeting with two reps from EECD regarding their transition plan in the Francophone sector and the Disability Action Plan.
 - Received a letter endorsing DAW and activities from the Minister, after request was made
 - Sent letter to the Minister regarding supports for students with a disability and returning to schools during COVID
- *Economic and Social Inclusion*
 - Meeting with Director of ESIC to discuss the Disability Action Plan
- *Treasury Board*
 - Meeting regarding the Equal Employment Opportunity Program and the Disability Action Plan
- *NB Human Rights Commission*
 - Conference call on the Accessibility Legislation
 - Meeting with the Director on various topics such as the Disability Action Plan
- *Federal/Provincial/Territories*
 - Participated on several FPT conference calls with the Provincial-Territorial Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee
 - Worked with provinces on updates for persons with a disability during the pandemic
 - Participated in a two-day virtual policy workshop on disability and work in Canada.
 - Participated in a call hosted by the Open Forum Accessibility NB

PCD Meetings, Presentations, Collaboration with Private and Non-Profit Sectors

- Neil Squire Society

- Autism Resource Centres of New Brunswick
- National Forum on Accessibility
- Various schools in NB
- NB Disability Executives Network
- Ability NB
- Autism Connection NB
- Renaissance College
- STU
- NB Coalition for persons with a disability
- NB Association for Community Living
- OPAL Family Services

Committees and Work Groups 2020-2021

The PCD participates on several committees and work groups to better address issues relating to persons with a disability, including:

- Inter-Departmental Committee on the Disability Action Plan
- Canadian Open Forum on Accessibility
- Federal/Provincial/Territorial Working Group on Disability Issues
- NB Employer Support Services Advisory Group
- Place 2000 Joint Health and Safety Committee
- Place 2000 Wellness Committee
- NB Disability Executives Network
- UNB Accessibility Committee

Official Languages

The Premier's Council on Disabilities recognizes its obligations and is committed to actively offering and providing quality services to the public in the public's official language of choice. We are pleased to report that there were no complaints filed with the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021.

Premier's Council on Disabilities

Financial Statements

March 31, 2021

Premier's Council on Disabilities

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Independent Auditor's Report

To: The Members of Premier's Council on Disabilities

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Premier's Council on Disabilities, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2021, and the statements of operations and changes in accumulated surplus and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the organization as at March 31, 2021, and its results of operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the organization in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the organization's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the organization's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- ◆ Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

Independent Auditor's Report, continued

- ◆ Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the organization's internal control.
- ◆ Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- ◆ Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- ◆ Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Fredericton, New Brunswick
July 19, 2022


Chartered Professional Accountants

Premier's Council on Disabilities

Statement of Financial Position

As at March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
FINANCIAL ASSET		
Due from related party, Province of New Brunswick (note 3)	\$ 180,554	\$ 113,733
LIABILITY		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (note 4)	\$ 17,017	\$ 7,383
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS		
Surplus	163,537	106,350
	<u>\$ 180,554</u>	<u>\$ 113,733</u>

Approved

Members

Members

Randy Dickinson
Carl W.

Premier's Council on Disabilities
Statement of Operations and Changes in Accumulated Surplus
Year ended March 31, 2021

	2021 Budget	2021 Actual	2020 Actual
Revenues			
Province of New Brunswick	\$ 302,158	\$ 302,158	\$ 300,540
Disability Awareness Week	-	48,000	68,839
December 3rd UN Day	-	-	2,199
Miscellaneous income	-	-	1,245
	<u>302,158</u>	<u>350,158</u>	<u>372,823</u>
Expenditures			
Salaries and related benefits	276,158	231,790	247,082
Translation & Interpretation	11,000	18,959	35,699
Disability Awareness Week	-	18,954	62,462
Council Meetings, Travel and Honoraria	6,500	11,775	29,736
Telephone	3,500	4,063	4,997
Printing	500	2,628	1,833
IT & Web	-	2,093	259
Office supplies	1,500	1,450	12,770
Postage	500	673	155
Training and professional development	-	294	1,089
Parking	500	174	863
Staff Meetings & Travel	2,000	118	2,263
Environmental Scan	-	-	22,437
Miscellaneous and bank fees	-	-	4,200
December 3rd UN Day	-	-	3,914
	<u>302,158</u>	<u>292,971</u>	<u>429,759</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	-	57,187	(56,936)
Accumulated Surplus, opening	<u>-</u>	<u>106,350</u>	<u>163,286</u>
Accumulated Surplus, closing	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 163,537</u>	<u>\$ 106,350</u>

Premier's Council on Disabilities

Statement of Cash Flows
Year ended March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
Operating activities		
Cash receipts from Province of New Brunswick	\$ 235,337	\$ 357,794
Cash receipts from others	48,000	72,283
Cash paid to suppliers and employees	<u>(283,337)</u>	<u>(430,077)</u>
Change in cash position	-	-
Cash, opening	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Cash, closing	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

The Council's source of cash is the Province of New Brunswick. The corporation does not maintain a separate bank account and all operating activities are processed through the Province of New Brunswick.

Premier's Council on Disabilities

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2021

1. Nature of operations

Premier's Council on Disabilities is a body for consultation and study which was created to advise the provincial government and the general public on matters relating to the status of persons with disabilities. The Council reports directly to the Premier of New Brunswick. The council is exempt from income taxes under ITA 149(1)(d).

2. Significant accounting policies

These financial statements are prepared in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards. The significant accounting policies are detailed as follows:

(a) Revenue recognition

Revenue is recorded on the accrual basis.

The Council follows the deferral method of accounting for grants received for operations and specific projects. Grants to be used for specific purposes are recognized as revenue in the period in which the related expenditures are incurred. When a portion of a grant relates to a future period, it is deferred and recognized in the appropriate period.

The Council currently receives 99% of their revenue from the Province of New Brunswick and related departments.

(b) Capital assets

The Council records capital expenditures under \$100,000 as current period expenses as incurred.

(c) Pension plans and other retirement benefit plans

Certain employees of the Council are entitled to receive pension benefits under the New Brunswick Public Service Pension Plan (NBPSPP). The NBPSPP is a multi-employer pension plan which targets a retirement benefit and is subject to legislation under the Provincial Pension Benefits Act and is subject to the Federal Income Tax Act. Contributions are made by both the Council and the employees at the rates established by the Board of Trustees. The Council is not responsible for any unfunded liability nor does it have access to any surplus with respect to its employee pensions.

Premier's Council on Disabilities

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2021

2. Significant accounting policies, continued

(d) Financial instruments

The organization initially measures its financial assets and liabilities at fair value, except for certain non-arm's length transactions. The organization subsequently measures its financial assets and financial liabilities at amortized cost, except for securities quoted in an active market, which are subsequently measured at fair value.

Financial liabilities measured at amortized cost include accounts payable and accrued liabilities.

(e) Measurement uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

3. Related party transactions

The Province of New Brunswick pays all costs on behalf of the Council throughout the year.

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
Province of New Brunswick	<u>\$ 180,554</u>	<u>\$ 113,733</u>

The amount due from the Province of New Brunswick represents the amount due to the Council for the excess of approved funding over expenditures incurred.

During the year, the Province of New Brunswick authorized funding totaling \$302,158 (2020- \$315,540). Additionally, the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour authorized funding totaling \$46,500 (2020- \$46,500).

The Province of New Brunswick also provides certain support to the Council at no cost, including office space and other support services including policy advisors, IT services, reception services, and records management. The value of these expenses cannot be reasonably determined and are accordingly not reflected in these financial statements.

Premier's Council on Disabilities

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2021

4. Accounts payable and accrued liabilities

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
Vacation accrual	\$ 9,204	\$ 3,143
Salary accrual	7,813	4,109
Trade payables	<u>-</u>	<u>131</u>
	<u>\$ 17,017</u>	<u>\$ 7,383</u>

5. Economic dependence

The Premier's Council on Disabilities is economically dependent on the Province of New Brunswick as it receives a significant portion of its funding from the Province.

6. Other

The outbreak of a novel strain of coronavirus resulted in the global declaration of a pandemic by the World Health Organization on March 11, 2020. Government measures in place to combat the health threat of the virus have caused material disruption to businesses globally resulting in an economic slowdown. The duration and impact of the outbreak are unknown at this time, as are the efficacy of government and central bank interventions. It is not possible to reliably estimate the length and severity of the measures nor their impact on the future financial results and condition of the corporation. Any impact to March 31, 2021 has been included in these financial statements.