





2024 ANNUAL REPORT

BIDE AWHILE

Bide Awhile Animal Shelter Society

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Agenda & Meeting Guidelines, Page 3

President's Message. Page 4

Executive Director's Message, Page 5

Animal Statistics, Page 7

Finance Committee Report, Page 8

Fundraising Committee Report, Page 10

Volunteer Committee Report, Page 12

Strategic Planning Committee Report, Page 13

Nominating Committee Report, Page 14



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AGENDA

May 28th, 2025

Welcome Opening Remarks

Approval of Minutes of the 2023 AGM

Business Arising from the Minutes

President's Message, Thom Williams

Executive Director's Message, Liesje Somers-Blonde

Finance Committee Report, Fay Dickinson

Fundraising Committee Report, Erin Davison

Volunteer Committee Report, Jenny-Leigh Dionne

Strategic Planning Committee Report, Trish Lizée

Nominating Committee Report, Aaron Veinotte

Acceptance of Reports

General Business

Closing Remarks

Adjournment

MEETING GUIDELINES

House Keeping Items

Turn off cell phones for the duration of the meeting.

Please mute your microphone, only one speaker at a time should discussion occur,

Non-Members

We welcome non-members to our AGM. We request that they respect their role as observes only; therefor are not entitled to challenge, enter into debate, move, second or vote on a motion.

Debate & Voting

Voting is by written acknowledgement in the chat.

75% of attending membership must agree to enter into debate.

To pass a motion, 75% of the attending membership's support is required.

Role of the President

Ensures the meeting moves forward,

Limits discussion to matters within the scope of the meeting.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Thom Williams



As we convene for our Annual General Meeting, I am excited to share the highlights of an extraordinary year for Bide Awhile Animal Shelter in 2024.

Record Adoption Levels
We achieved our highest adoption rates in history this year, over 600, a true testament to our dedicated staff, volunteers, and community support. Each adoption marks a new beginning for the animals as they find loving homes, reinforcing our commitment to animals in need.

Exceptional Management and Staff Contributions
The commitment of our Management and Staff has been crucial to our success in 2024. Their professionalism has enabled us to effectively navigate challenges while upholding our mission and values in the care of our animals. Our Board's support has been instrumental in positioning Bide Awhile for a bright future as we celebrate 55 years of service to our community.

Community Support in Challenging Times
I would like to highlight the significant work Bide Awhile Animal Shelter has done to support pet owners facing challenges due to rising food costs and inflation. Many families are struggling to provide necessary food for their pets, and we have witnessed a considerable increase in the use of our Pet Pantry, which supplies food to those in need.

In 2024, our efforts were bolstered by a $10,000 grant through the Participatory Budgeting program, and the work of District 5 Councilor, Sam Auston, which allowed us to replenish our Pet Food Pantry and better meet the growing needs of the community. This support has been vital in helping families care for their pets during these difficult times, ensuring that love for animals does not come at the expense of their health and well-being.

Major Rescue Operations
In the late summer of 2024, we faced an urgent rescue of 94 kittens and cats. Thanks to our dedicated team, all animals were promptly brought in, received veterinary care, and after a thorough quarantine, were successfully adopted into forever homes.

Our ability to assist during this crisis was made possible by the generous support of our members and community. When we called for help covering veterinary costs and food, you answered with overwhelming kindness, ensuring every rescued cat received the necessary care. This outpouring is key to helping us at Bide Awhile do what we do best, and exemplifies the strength of our community, and I extend my heartfelt gratitude for your support during this critical time.

Looking Ahead
As we continue to build on this year's successes, we remain committed to improving our programs and outreach efforts, ensuring we support both animals and their owners effectively.

Thank you for your ongoing dedication to Bide Awhile Animal Shelter. Your contributions — whether through volunteering, donations, or advocacy — enable us to reach these milestones for the benefit of our community and its animals. I look forward to another successful year together!

Warm regards,

Thomas Williams
President, Bide Awhile Animal Shelter



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Liesje Somers-Blonde

This past year at Bide Awhile Animal Shelter has been a time of growth, innovation, and deep commitment to our mission of providing safe haven and shelter for companion animals while promoting responsible pet ownership.

Animal Care & Adoptions

We are proud to report that over the past year:

- Adoption totals for 2024 hit an all-time high with 616 cats and 18 dogs. We worked diligently to provide shelter, medical treatment, enrichment, and loving care for all companions who came through our doors.
- Our Long-term Foster/Palliative Care program saw 5 cats fully adopted (removed) from the program and 4 new additions, bringing the number to 16 animals currently benefiting from this program.
- We worked to rescue 94 cats from one property during the months of August, September and October. Most of whom were adopted by the end of 2024.

Programs & Services

We continued to grow our services to meet the needs of the community:

- Low-cost spay/neuter surgeries for 478 animals were provided through our partnership with Eastern Passage Village Vet and Uniacke Lakes Animal Hospital.
- The shelter strengthened our volunteer opportunities with:
- Behaviour Adjustment Training
- Department of National Defense
- The Pet Food Pantry grew to include the MFRC (Military Family Resource Centre) and Mulgrave Park. We partner with MOSH (Mobile Outreach for Street Health) and The Overlook to provide pet food to their participants.

Community Engagement

We have strengthened our presence and partnerships in the community through:

- Accredited with Humane Canada as an Associate.
- Increasing our social media following by 18% to 28,700 and garnering over 4.2 million views on stories of animals and impact in the community.
- We maintained our title as the Platinum winner of the Halifax Community Votes, Best Non-Profit award.
- We hosted community groups and supported other non-profits like Spay Day, 9 Lives, SPCA, and Hope for Wildlife

Facility & Operations Improvements

To better serve animals and people, we invested in critical improvements, including:

- Fully digital tracking software for animals in our care.
- We achieved a 90% paperless working environment.
- Implemented new cleaning protocols and staff training to maintain high standards of animal welfare.

Financial Stewardship & Fundraising

Despite ongoing economic challenges, we remained financially stable thanks to the generosity of donors, sponsors, and grantors:

- Hosted our most successful fundraiser yet, Pours for Paws, bringing in $15,500.
- Team Tails in Motion ran in the Bluenose Marathon and raised just over $10,500.
- We launched a fundraising campaign for the Spooks Memorial Kitty Fund to raise awareness about the importance of spaying and neutering pets. The campaign was successful, securing sufficient funds to sustain the program for the foreseeable future.
- When we were asked to help with 94 cats from one property, we quickly realized that this would be a big financial undertaking for Bide Awhile. We put out a call for support to our community which resulted in large media coverage and over $60,000 raised to care for those companions.
- Our donations have increased by 33% in 2024, totaling $324,719.

Staff & Leadership Development
Our dedicated team is the heart of Bide Awhile. This year we:

- Attended the Humane Canada Summit for Animals in Halifax, NS.
- Grew our staff capacity to better meet the needs of the animals in our care.
- We leveraged our connections in the community to further our knowledge of the charitable and animal welfare industry.

Looking Ahead
As we look to the future, we are excited to pursue the following goals:

- Exploring the establishment of an on-site low-income spay/neuter clinic to support rescue animals and low-income families.
- Strengthening partnerships with other rescues and veterinary providers to amplify our impact for low cost spay and neuter across the province.
- Continuing to prioritize staff well-being and leadership development to better serve the animals and people in our community.

Gratitude
None of these achievements would be possible without the support of our board of directors, staff, volunteers, donors, and community partners. I am deeply grateful for your dedication to the animals and the mission of Bide Awhile. Together, we are creating brighter futures for pets and people alike.

Thank you for your trust and partnership. I look forward to working with all of you as we continue to grow and evolve in the year ahead.

Respectfully submitted,

Liesje Somers-Blonde
Executive Director, Bide Awhile Animal Shelter

ANIMAL STATISTICS

ANIMALS IN

Period	Cats	Dogs	Total
2023	528	18	546
2024	544	31	575
2025 (to date)	133	8	141

ADOPTIONS

Period	Cats	Dogs	Total	Male	Female
2023	578	20	598	268	330
2024	616	18	634	279	355
2025 (to date)	135	16	151	66	85

SPAY/NEUTER PROGRAM

Period	Total
2023	465
2024	478
2025 (to date)	46

PALLATIVE CARE FOSTERS

Total
20
16
18

EUTHANASIA

Period	Total
2023	57
2024	19
2025 (to date)	4

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Fay Dickinson, Treasurer

This report covers Bide Awhile's 2024 fiscal year, ended December 31.
The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. The financial statements in your meeting packages include the following information:

- Miles T. Sweeney Limited, Chartered Professional Accountants' Review Engagement Report (page 1). Miles Sweeney has issued an unmodified opinion on the 2024 financial statements.
- Statement of Financial Position (page 2) presenting Bide Awhile's financial health at a given point in time (December 31, 2024). This statement summarizes Bide Awhile's assets (what we own) as well as the liabilities we are required to settle in future periods. (what we owe). The difference between asset and liabilities is presented as our net assets.
- Statement of Revenues and Expenditures (page 3) reports the results of Bide Awhile's operations and other activities during 2024 compared with that in 2023. It shows revenues less expenditures, grouped as Operations and Other Income.
- Operations relates to the shelter's core activities; providing animal welfare services; supporter donation receipts and fundraising initiatives.
- Other Income relates mainly to investment activities.
- Statement of Cash Flows (page 5) reconciles our excess of revenues over expenses to the cash balance at the end of the year. Cash flows are broken out into Operating cash flows (which arise from day to day operations) and Investing cash flows (which generally relate to long-term assets, such as capital assets or investments held in an investment account).
- Notes to the Financial Statements (page 6-10) describe Bide Awhile's accounting policies and provide further explanation and details of items found in the financial statements or other items that would be meaningful too users to ensure the financial statements are relevant and reliable.

Highlights for 2024:
Statement of Financial Position

Cash
At year-end, Bide Awhile had a cash balance of $219k, down from $235k at the end of 2023. The change in cash is highlighted in the Statement of Cash Flows, but it is largely driven by purchases of investments ($24k) and capital assets ($8k), partially offset by cash generated by operations ($16k).

Working Capital
Working capital represents current assets (what is expected to become realized in a one-year period) less current liabilities (what is expected to become due in a one-year period. At year-end, Bide Awhile had working capital of $121k (2023 - $202k) and a current ratio of 1.77:1 (2023 – 2.89), meaning for every dollar of current liabilities, Bide Awhile has $1.77 of current assets to cover it.

Working capital has declined since 2023, though this is largely due to a higher portion of assets being held in long-term investment accounts to earn a better return on excess cash. The finance committee monitors cash flow needs to ensure that excess cash is transferred to the investment account and investment income earned helps finance operations and other cash outflows. The committee also meets with our investment advisor to review the asset mix. 2024 was a strong year for investments and we recognize there may be significantly more uncertainty going into 2025. While this is a situation we will continue to monitor, we recognize that in times of uncertainty it is often prudent to avoid making rash decisions when it comes to investments and currently do not have any concerns in the long-run given Bide Awhile's relative conservative investment policy and diverse portfolio.

Working capital was also affected by an increase in deferred contributions of $17k, which represents additional donations received for the Spooks Memorial Kitty program. This balance will be used for future spay or neuter operations performed under the program.

Net Assets

Overall, Bide Awhile has a net asset balance of $1.77M (2023 - $1.77M). These net assets would be sufficient to fund about a year and a half's worth of expenses should Bide Awhile be in a position it could not generate revenues, which speaks to the financial viability of the shelter in the short to medium-term. The fact that this has remained relatively consistent supports that, including investment income, the shelter is operating about at breakeven. The Board is actively looking for ways to generate revenues and/or cut costs to ensure that Bide Awhile is economically sustainable in the long-term. This will reduce reliance on investment income, which is important given the uncertain economic times. Additionally, this will provide cash flows that can be used to finance needed capital expenditures, such as shelter repairs, and other projects that support our Vision, Mission, and Values.

Statement of Revenues and Expenditures

Revenues

In 2024, total revenue was $981k (an increase of $67k from 2023). Increases were largely due to fundraising activities (largely due to 2024 being our first full year fundraising through Rafflebox) as well as adoptions, with 2024 being our busiest year for adoptions to date.

Expenses

Total expenses were $1.1M (an increase of $126k from 2023). This increase was largely driven by an increase in salaries and wages (which accounts for $78k of the increase). Wages as our largest expense so, as adoptions increase, we expect wages will as well. Additionally, we recognize the strain that the rising cost of living has on our staff and have provided wage increases in an attempt to foster a positive work environment, enhance employee satisfaction, and reinforce our commitment to ethical employment practices. We view these costs as an investment into the people who help make Bide Awhile the success that it is.

Fundraising expenses have also increased by $35k, which largely relates to the cost of Rafflebox (which, as previously noted, resulted in an increase to revenues). Overall, Bide Awhile raised approx $30k from Rafflebox in 2024.

Other expenses have also increased due to inflationary increases in most areas.

Other Income

In 2024, Bide Awhile's investment portfolio generated income of $125k (2023 - $92k), over half of which is unrealized gains driven by market conditions. As noted above, 2024 was a particular strong year for the economy in general and uncertainty in the market in 2025 may reduce these gains in the short-term.

Overall

Overall, Bide Awhile generated a surplus of $2k an overall decrease of $45k compared to 2023. The decline in results was due to Bide Awhile's operating deficit of $123k, a $77k decrease from 2023. The deficit was mitigated by Bide Awhile's investments' positive performance. It is notable that an overall loss was budgeted for 2024 so overall the excess of revenues is actually better than budgeted, but overall the current year operations emphasize the importance of the fundraising objectives of the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan to support sustainability.

Submitted by,

Fay Dickinson
Treasurer, Bide Awhile Animal Shelter

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

Erin Davison, Chair

Fundraising & Sponsorship Committee
The Fundraising and Sponsorship Committee collaborates with shelter staff to develop and implement large-scale fundraising strategies and initiatives to boost the shelter's operating revenues. Our subcommittees include Calendar/Pet Photo Contest, Fair/Market attendance, Grant Writing, Kennel Klub, Merchandise, Pours for Paws, Shelter-led Fundraising, and Tails in Motion (Bluenose Marathon). The committee comprises volunteers and members of the Board of Directors. We are pleased to report significant momentum and successes in 2024, with total fundraising efforts amounting to approximately $161,600.

Kennel Klub
Kennel Klub is Bide Awhile's monthly giving program, allowing donors to choose a donation amount that suits them. This flexible program helps us plan and budget our resources effectively. In 2024, our Kennel Klub members were responsible for $56,482 in funds raised.

Pours for Paws
Pours for Paws was held on April 13th 2024, a tasting event fundraiser held at Mic Mac Aquatic Club, the event featured 12 local breweries and distilleries, snacks, and a raffle on a gift basket. This event raised $15,509 for the shelter. The event sold out with 200 tickets. We aim to establish this as Bide Awhile's signature spring event. Committee convened earlier to make the event even bigger for 2025.

Tails in Motion
Tails in Motion is our running/walking and fundraising group that participates in events across HRM. Our team took part in the Emera Blue Nose Marathon in May, raising $10,653. Bide Awhile also hosted a water and cheer station, enhancing our community presence. We won the best water station and continued the momentum with planning for the next event early.

Merchandise
A local artist Tansy Rudnicki designed a limited edition graphic for Bide Awhile T-shirts "Every Tail Tells a Story". T-shirts were sold primarily at the holiday markets and at the shelter. Total shirts sold: 161 at $25 each. Sales: $4025 – Profit: $1323. Looking at buttons for 2025 and other designs and types of merchandise.

Holiday Markets
We participated in holiday markets, with volunteers and Board members representing Bide Awhile. We generated about $8900 in sales from calendars and other promotions. Our table featured items such as 2025 calendars, Bide Awhile honey, a quilt raffle, and promotional information.

Pet Photo Contest and Calendar Sale
The Pet Photo Contest and calendar sale remain strong fundraising opportunities. The production cost of $8,000 was entirely offset by sponsorships, allowing us to produce the calendar at no cost. Sales for the 2025 calendar and Pet Photo Contest totaled $21,060 through retail locations, market sales, and direct sales by representatives.

Online Fundraising Initiatives
Key online fundraising initiatives included monthly raffles promoted through our website and Facebook page. The total raised through raffle box was $77,015. We plan to continue these raffles monthly in 2025. Additionally, our Giving Tuesday campaign raised $33,492 through online channels. Giving Tuesday is a global generosity movement created to encourage people to "do good" on the Tuesday after US Thanksgiving. Our supporters responded generously, contributing significantly to our efforts.

Shelter-Led Fundraising Activities
Shelter-led activities were robust in 2024, with events like "Cat" Fitness sessions, including Yoga with adoptable companions, raising a combined total of $7,890. Other activities included "Cat vs. Dog" voting buckets, Paws and Pages, Tarot Card, Bide Awhile Bees honey sales, and the Blue Nose Bottle return.

Looking Ahead to 2025/2026
We look forward to a year of growth and strategic fundraising in 2025/26. We have met with a fundraiser consultant. Our committee is fortunate to have members with diverse skills that will help achieve our goal of impactful and sustainable fundraising. If you are interested in joining the Fundraising Committee or any subcommittees, please contact myself, Erin Davison, at 902-790-3010 and erindavison93@gmail.com.

Submitted by,

Erin Davison
Fundraising Committee Chair, Bide Awhile Animal Shelter

VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE

Jenny-Leigh Dionne, Chair

It's been another wonderful year for the Volunteer Committee at Bide Awhile. This year, our focus was on deepening our connection with both current and prospective volunteers—not only to express our appreciation for their ongoing dedication, but also to fill key roles that needed extra support.

We saw an exciting opportunity to reach more volunteers through social media, inspired by the success of other committees. We began promoting volunteer opportunities on Bide Awhile's social media, and we're happy to report that we've seen strong engagement and positive responses from the community. This approach has already helped us connect with new faces eager to support the shelter.

We also continued learning and expanding our use of TimeCounts, our volunteer management platform. This year, we were able to create tailored onboarding applications specific to volunteer roles, making it easier to track applicants from social media outreach and follow up with relevant information. It's been a game-changer in helping us stay organized and responsive.

One of the most exciting additions this year was the introduction of a volunteer orientation video, produced by the shelter team. This video walks new volunteers through shelter safety procedures and gives them a glimpse of what to expect during their shifts. It's now shared with all volunteers upon registration and tracked through TimeCounts once completed—ensuring a smooth and consistent onboarding experience.

Volunteers have continued to play a vital role in the day-to-day operations of the shelter. From cat socialization to laundry, general shelter upkeep, and more, their helping hands are everywhere. Outside the shelter, Bide Awhile volunteers proudly represented us at more than 20 public events, including holiday markets, farmers markets, the Blue Nose Marathon, Pours for Paws, and community outreach tables at local pet stores. Their presence and positivity help us extend our mission far beyond our doors.

Looking ahead, we're planning to launch a volunteer feedback survey to learn more about how we can support and improve the volunteer experience. This feedback will guide our efforts as we continue to grow and strengthen our volunteer program.

To every volunteer who has given their time, talent, and heart this past year—we thank you. Your contributions make everything we do at Bide Awhile possible, and we are endlessly grateful for the care and compassion you bring to the animals and our community.

Submitted by,

Jenny-Leigh Dionne
Volunteer Committee Chair, Bide Awhile Animal Shelter

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITEE

Trish Lizée, Co-Chair

The committee is moving forward with discussions around strategies that will involve new fundraising directions and a new capital funds plan. The committee is also charged with creating a plan for BAW's upcoming 60th anniversary year.

Corner Stone Priorities – Completed Items:

1a Healthy Workplace
To be an employer of choice
- Create an employee Handbook
- Lunch and Learns to promote learning - quarterly

1b Thought Leadership
To be a recognized leader in progressive companion animal welfare practices and rights
- Animal Welfare Advocacy - Associate Member of Humane Canada

1c Community Impact
To implement and expand programs to support people and their companion animal to ensure forever homes
- Palliative Care
- Moms and Babies
- Engaging Youth to Volunteer
- Pet Food Pantry

2 Organization Effectiveness
To ensure consistency, accuracy, and efficiency in all BAW practices
- Standardized operating procedures
- Technology/paperless office
- Volunteer management/engagement

3 Sustainability
To ensure BAW's vitality and longevity
- Investments
- Board Governance

4. Credibility
To be the premier companion animal shelter in Nova Scotia
- Humane Canada Certification - Accredited
- Fear Free Shelter (Staff Certification)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Aaron Veinotte, Chair

The Nominating Committee's mandate is to recruit board members who are prepared to commit their volunteer efforts and talents to the work of Bide Awhile Animal Shelter Society and to take on leadership positions within the Society on various committees and as Officers.

Unfortunately, not everyone will be able to return to the board for the upcoming year. The following members will not be returning for the upcoming year:

- Stephanie Ryan
- Jenny-Leigh Dionne
- Thom Williams
- Kimberley McOnie

We would like to thank these members for their many contributions over their terms, we wish you all the best. For the 2025-2026 year, the approach to nominations changed through discussion with the board of directors. As four members are not returning, those positions will not be filled and Bide Awhile will operate for the year with 14 Directors. This approach to reducing the size of the board will be reassessed for the following board year.

Recommendations for Directors and Officers for 2025-2026 term

The following Director has completed their seventh term and are reoffering for an eighth term:
- Aaron Veinotte

The following Director has completed their sixth term and are reoffering for a seventh term;
- Florence MacLennan

The following Directors have completed their third term and are reoffering for a fourth term;
- Fay Dickinson
- Charley Baxter
- Angela Martin
- Liz Doyle-Willis

The following Directors have completed their second term and are reoffering for a third term;
- Erin Davison
- Wendy De Kimpe
- Cherie Dufour
- Jenna Gromack
- Trish Jolly

The following Directors have completed their first term and are reoffering for a second term;
- Sophia McGean
- Melanie Lewell
- Amanda Ash

NOMINATING COMMITTEE (Continued)

Aaron Veinotte, Chair

The proposed slate of Officers for 2025-2026

Aaron Veinotte as Past-President
Angela Martin as President
Erin Davison as Vice President
Fay Dickinson as Treasurer
Liz Doyle-Willis as Secretary

Thank you to all the Directors both returning and departing for all their efforts this past year.