

SUPPORTING SOCIAL PLANNING and ACTION in REVELSTOKE

Social Development Committee Meeting Minutes February 25, 2009

PRESENT: Anne Cooper, Cathy Girling, Lory Borges, Mary Kline, John Yakielashek, Melissa Klages, Antoinette Halberstadt, Jane McNab, Elmer Shoji, and Nelli Richardson.
STAFF: Jill Zacharias, Alan Mason and Debra Wozniak
REGRETS: Tony Scarcella, Steve Bailey, Brian Sumner, Melodie Kindred, Linda Chell

1. **Call to order** – Chair Nelli Richardson called the meeting to order at 8.34 am

2. **Agenda**

Motion

Moved by Jane McNab and seconded by Mary Kline that the Agenda be approved.

Carried

3. **Minutes of January 28, 2009**

Motion

Moved by John Yakeilashek and seconded by Cathy Girling that the Minutes of January 28, 2009 be approved.

Carried

4. **Coordinators Report**

Jill Zacharias reviewed the Coordinators report:

- Website: Discussion was held regarding archiving ‘Celebration of Achievements’ content as it is changed, and creating a ‘Special Projects’ tab. Jill and Deb to look into doing this. Discussion was held regarding the use of photos, and obtaining permission to do so. Jill will check on status of current photos & ensure waivers are signed before photos are posted in the future.
- Everyone encouraged to register for the Enterprising Non-profits workshop on March 24 & CEDNET conference March 25 & 26.

5. **Old Business**

- Committee membership and Terms of Reference revisions were discussed. Alan Mason will draft amendments regarding committee membership, sector representation, and terms, and bring to the next meeting for review and recommendations.
- No response has been received to date by the City of Revelstoke from the Taxi Licensing Board. Discussion followed regarding a recent inquiry to establish a new taxi service. Alan will follow up on taxi licensing procedures/eligibility and bring more information back to the next meeting. Jill will draft a follow up letter to the Taxi Licensing Board and circulate for committee member review before submitting to the City.

6. **New Business:**

- Vice Chair: Nelli advised that the committee should select a vice chair to act in her absence. Agreed that a vice chair will be appointed when membership is renewed in April.
- Columbia Basin Trust Community Initiatives Application: Alan advised that the City of Revelstoke has submitted a funding request of \$25,000 for the Social Coordinator position. Nelli agreed to present the project at the public meeting on March 9 if no one else wanted to. Discussion followed regarding who should make the public presentation. Cathy suggested that it may be more appropriate for the City to make the presentation rather than a committee member.
- North Columbia Environmental Society sent a letter requesting if the Social Committee would be interested in participating in or could provide input to a Community Gardens project. It was noted that NCES are already entered into discussions with Community Connections, the City, and Illecillewaet Greenbelt Society, among others about the project. Discussion followed regarding how this project fits in with the existing community garden project managed by Community Connections. Jill to respond that the following be taken into consideration:
 - The area may have been used in the past for illegal dumping; an environmental assessment is probably needed.
 - Consulting Bear Aware may be prudent considering active wildlife in the area.
 - Accessibility may be an issue - will transportation/access to the proposed site be addressed as this site is not on the transit route – potential use for RMR transit buses in summer months.
 - Will this project replace the existing community garden or is it a separate initiative with a different objective?
 - Irrigation.

7. Roundtable.

- John Yakielashek and Elmer Shoji left the meeting at 9.30 am.
- Anne – School District preparing 2009-2010 budget and projecting a 3% decline (K cohort is 58 students) in school enrolment. They are also rolling up the literacy data and more support is being offered for grade 8 and 9.
- Melissa – Pleased with response from seniors; will help with collating survey data.
- Alan – Downie and other forestry lay offs are adding stress to the existing social system capacity.
- Lory – Noted the importance of the timing of the substance use workshop in light of the current economic conditions which will lead to increased usage and social impacts. Also today is wear pink day to stop school bullying.
- Mary – Participated in a presentation at Downie mill regarding service provider assistance for workers being laid off. On March 5 the College will be hosting a WelcomeBC Welcoming and Inclusive Communities and Workplaces program meeting and everyone is invited to attend.
- Cathy – Community Connections is experiencing an increase in client activity: a lot of stressed people resulting from slow down of the economy. Noted that as much as 60% of recent national layoffs may not be eligible for EI because of changes in eligibility requirements made a few years ago. The following barriers for people applying for EI assistance were discussed:

- Even people who are entitled to benefits are having difficulty accessing them. Specifically, in Revelstoke barriers to access for those entitled are directly related to a lack of a local Service Canada office in the community.
- Often when clients phone EI, no one answers the phone. When a service provider succeeds in getting a client service representative on the phone, they are given 2 options: go to your local office, or access EI via a computer. Many clients do not have access to a computer, and if they do, have extreme difficulty navigating the Service Canada - EI website. It was suggested that it would help somewhat if Service Canada would hire more staff to answer phones.
- Because E.I. wait times for receiving benefits have increased due to the increased processing time for the increased numbers of claims, claimants are having to turn to Income Assistance, which is equally difficult to access due to the lack of a Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance office in town.

Motion:

Moved by Cathy Girling and seconded by Jane McNab that City Council lobby the federal government for changes to the eligibility requirements to EI and access to services.

Carried

- It was suggested that perhaps the medical bus could be used to take applicants to Salmon Arm to deal with EI applications, if they are unable to file using a computer. Noted that the literacy volunteers are willing to help submit EI applications but are not trained to deal with other client issues - which affect their ability to help out.
- Cathy – Homeless Outreach Worker busy working with homeless persons. A Tenant Support Worker has been hired to support residents of Monashee Court.
- Jane – Will be participating on the Columbia Basin Trust Social Sector Committee. Recently trained as a community income tax volunteer.
- Antoinette – Has Emergency Housing raffle tickets. Renters Voice referrals to Cathy Girling’s Community Connections advocacy services has had excellent results. Renter’s Voice support group meets once a month for renters in crisis wanting peer support and referral. Will circulate information about the homelessness movie which may include scenes from Revelstoke. Considering being nominated as a liaison between City Council, the UBCM and the School District on promoting the school curriculum to include effective parliamentary and legal rights education.
- Jill (for Linda Chell) – The next 3 year-old fair is Wednesday April 1 from 9:30 to 11:30 am at the Community Centre & is for children born in 2005. The ECD Committee is hosting well known Guest Speaker Fiona Morrison on April 25. This workshop is for parents, educators, child care providers and early childhood service providers. Morning: sand and water play workshop; afternoon: dramatic play workshop.

9. Meeting adjourned at 10:15 am

Nelli Richardson, Chair

Revelstoke Community Social Development Committee Coordinator's Report - February 25, 2009

1. Communication, Support & Coordination

Website:

- updated home page "Celebration of Achievements"
- Another 'special projects' tab?

Media:

- Photo/article in the Times Review Feb 4th edition (re: Seniors' planning)

Committees/Groups:

- Jan 28th, Feb 11th, Feb 24th – OCP Steering Committee
- Jan 29th – Emergency Housing Committee meeting – met new Housing Outreach Worker.
- Jan 29th – CFDC meeting
- Jan 30th – Attended coffee session with Tom Gaglardi
- Feb 3rd – OC Welcoming and Inclusive Communities and Workplaces project – at the Community Partnerships Development phase (end date May) – a number of immigrants attended the meeting as well – very interesting to hear about barriers, lack of resources for new immigrants in the community, and ideas of how to make Revelstoke a more welcoming place – idea is that collaborative partnerships build community capacity (to be more welcoming), need to build a common vision, appreciate cultural diversity, prevent racism, enriching/strengthening social fabric of the community. Will attend meetings as a community partner – OK?
- Feb 11th – Final meeting of the Community Development Action Plan (CDAP) Steering committee
- Feb 18th – Renters' Voice
- Feb 23rd – ECD planning session

2. Seniors' Planning

- Community consultation phase complete - Seniors' Issues Survey Distribution far & wide + spoke to groups at Mt. Begbie Manor, Monashee Crt, Selkirk Gardens, 'hands-on' session with Jane McNab at the Food Bank. Public Meeting at the Seniors' Centre was well attended – over 80 people came. Survey return far exceeded expectations. 230 including 39 online.
- Next steps: collate survey results, recommendations (seniors' planning committee), integrate into draft plan.
- Seniors' Computer Lab – needs upgrading; assisted in filling out a CBT application to do so. Although volunteers have begun to help out in the lab, will investigate funding opportunities to staff the lab/workshops/maintenance.
- HandyDart – experiencing problems in getting it up & running; will investigate what is working in other small communities.

3. Substance Abuse

- A reminder of the sessions in early March, Dan Reist from the BC Centre for Addictions Research will do a public presentation (Tuesday Mar 3rd at 7 pm) and a Stakeholder Workshop/Planning Session (Wednesday Mar 4th 8:30-11:30 am) on "Building a Community-Wide Approach to Address Substance Abuse".
- Have sent out invitations to all the stakeholders in the community – received confirmation from 11 people so far.

4. Miscellaneous

- CEDNET Rural Network AGM & workshops in March & Enterprising Non-profits workshop – I have registered for this professional development opportunity.