



## **NHC Meeting Minutes**

### **10am - 12pm, May 7, 2020**

In attendance:

Jason Harrison (CMHS), Yvonne Borrows (Salvation Army), Lisa Bhopalsingh (CoN), Karin Kronstal (CoN), Signy Madden (UWCNVI), Dave LaBerge (CoN), Dave Steward (CoN), Grace Kerr (Service Canada), Andrew Thornton (JHS), John McCormick (JHS), Heidi Hartman (BC Housing), Nadia Boukhouali (MSDPR), Karly Fennell (IH), Terra Kaethler (UWCNVI), Nicole Benson (UWCNVI), Emily Sorensen (UWCNVI), Shelley Johnstone (UWCNVI), Violet Hayes (ICCS), Inga Cooper (Tillicum Lelum), Theresa MacDonald (SEIA), Kix Citton (NBIS), Isha Matous-Gibbs (Unitarian Shelter), Paul Sibley (Nanaimo Hospice), Gord Fuller (7-10 Club), Chantale Roelens (SEIA), Kim Maandag (Salvation Army), Steve Arnett (Indigenous Community Member), Don Bonner (City Councillor), Erin Hemmens (City Councillor), Shelley Maunula (Haven), Rana Van Tuyl (Celebrate our Differences), Kim Smythe (Chamber of Commerce), Theo Boere (The Mens Centre), E. Jane Osborne (Public Health), Amanda Lemon (Island Health), Andrew Ferguson (JHS), Dennis Creighton and Alexis Petersen (Harewood Neighbourhood House), Paul Manley (MP), Jill Smith (AVI), Taryn O'Flanagan (VIMHS), Sheila Malcolmson (MLA), Keith Wilson (NYSA), Carolyn Sampson (Correction Services Canada), Lisa Murphy (Island Health), Tanis Dagert (NCAT), Brenda Fowler, Joy Bremner, Kerry Watters, Deirdre O'Beirne-Rosaeg (MP assistant), Rhiannon and Delaney (Literacy Central VI)

**Chair: Yvonne**

### **Minutes:**

Signy wanted to thank everyone for all of their hard work during these difficult times.

1. Confirm minutes of April 2, 2020 NHC meeting.

**MOTION to accept the Minutes**

Moved by Violet Hayes    Seconded by Isha Matous-Gibbs    **PASSED**

2. Confirm agenda

**MOTION to accept the Agenda**

Moved by Kix Citton    Seconded by Violet Hayes    **PASSED**

### 3. NHC structure - NHC Governance committee – (Jason, CMHA)

- We will be working on the Governance structure and reaching out as we start defining the committees. We will look at the Terms of Reference; Allocations Committee, Community Plan Committee. We need to be collecting information from NHC to take to Housing and Homelessness Task Force meetings.
- We do have to go back to the membership list to determine voting members and what that is vs. an informational member. We will be discussing this further.
- There is one vote per agency.
- The City was a voting member and has chosen to be not a voting member any longer, however continues to strongly support the Coalition.

### 4. COVID-19

- Emergency response working group (Jason, CMHA)
  - The Emergency Response working group is comprised of the Governance Committee and shelter providers. We were meeting 3 times a week for the first 6 weeks and we are now meeting once a week.
  - We may have some access to hotel rooms for the vulnerable population coming in the near future.
  - Early on, we made recommendation on possible responses, and there are a few of them in the works. Issues that we brought up were being heard and are being actions, which has been a good outcome. If there are things that agencies are aware of, please do reach out to us and we can take that forward on your behalf through the Coalition.
  - We advocated for more shelter beds, potential hotel rooms and support, isolation beds, food security, encampment support methods. Camping in the park overnight, relaxing restrictions will not be extended at this time but we did advocate.
  - Members: Violet(ICCS), Yvonne(SA), Inga(Tillicum Lelum), Jason(CMHA), John(NJHS), Isha(Unitarian Shelter), Taryn (VIMHS), Signy(UWCNVI), Terra(UWCNVI), Chantale (SEIA), Grace (Service Canada) and with participation from Lisa (CoN)
- City/HHTF update (Lisa, CoN)
  - Safe Supply was a pilot project early on during COVID-19 and now is a province wide approach and is not community by community. Lisa Murphy added that Safe Supply refers to alcohol security or managed substances often including addictions medicine, and has become a bit of a catch all. We are not there yet for this project, but it is moving fast and am happy to answer any questions. Tannis said that Dr. Wamsley will be giving an overview at their CAT meeting next week.
  - COVID response: last Thursday, the City, along with BC housing, announced the use of the services building as an Emergency Response Center and will be run by ICCS. There will be rooms where people can isolate that are at high risk and a separate space for women. 15 women from Samaritan house will be moving over and then the building will be renovated to phase in spaces for men as well. Options for Sexual health and 7-10 club will remain in the building and SEIA and NBIS will be moving.
  - We are talking about long term solutions for seniors and youth centers.
  - RCMP did an update at HHTF yesterday. Superintendent Cam Miller explained that in the Wesley street area there are concerns around sanitation, people were

being asked to move temporarily for workers to clean the area and toilets. Can talk to Dave Laberge or Kevin Flood if you have questions.

- Isha working on capacity for showers and laundry services.
  - Karin looking at options around meeting the needs around both peers and business community around employment programs.
  - HHTF endorsed guidelines/TOR for Food Security group for COVID and beyond. NFL, Nanaimo food share, Food for Thought, Terra UWCNVI, and others are part of the Food Security group.
  - Dr. Alina Turner presented the needs assessment for Nanaimo. The information was collected pre-COVID but is very valuable information and important to guide for funding requests and address gaps.
  - Design LABs may be redesigned for a virtual world.
  - The City is also facilitating Weekly call with shelter providers and BC housing and IH.
- Update on Turner Strategies initiative/Helpseeker (Karin, CoN)  
Helpseeker: We are trying to accelerate using the platform for people to manage their own information. We have a staff person delegated to this until at least the end of May. She will be contacting folks to update their information. This work will help is more towards the coordinated access system for housing. Her name is Lisa.
  - Sheila Malcolmson update:  
Yesterday's announcement moving into phase 2 of the Provincial government approach. The part that is directly related to Homelessness is:
    - Return to in person counseling
    - Return to fuller surgeries and physio procedures to help with pain management and dentists
    - Retail was never order to close and may bring more people to downtown this weekend.
    - None of the provincial health orders have been lifted.
    - Groups of 2-6 people with the general public not recommended, just close connections
  - RH funding update (Signy, UWCNVI)  
Two motions need to be passed by voting members of the CAB/Nanaimo Homeless Coalition related to investing the Covid-19 Reaching Home Funds for Nanaimo.

As a reminder, Nanaimo received funding from both the Indigenous and Designated Reaching Home funds to help during the Covid-19 pandemic. More information can be found here: Updated Covid-19 RH directives:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/homelessness/directives.html>

The Coalition approved the following two motions to be considered by the CAB electronically.

1. MOTION to open Expression of Interest (EOI) process for Covid-19 Reaching Home Funds in both Designated and Indigenous streams. UWCNVI, as CE, will administer the EOI process, in collaboration with the Allocations Committee which will review the applications and bring recommendations back to the Coalition for approval.

Moved by Yvonne .                      Seconded by Jason.                      PASSED

2. MOTION to allocate \$20,000 from Designated stream and \$20,000 from Indigenous stream into a rapid emergency response fund to be administered by United Way for immediate community needs. UWCNVI, as CE, will administer the Rapid Response Fund and distribute funds to community as requested

Moved by Yvonne

Seconded by Jason

PASSED

UW has been in touch with some of our Indigenous representatives about the both streams of funding and the decision making process for both streams. The Designated stream can be allocated on-reserve, and the Indigenous stream is to support work happening off reserve for Indigenous populations.

- Additional Funding coming to Nanaimo  
United Way received notification last night regarding Federal funding for our region. We will receive 1 million dollars to support agencies in our region from the Malahat, North. We will announce the process by May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020. We will be working with the Coalition to identify the most emergent needs.

#### 5. Communications update (Nicole, UWCNVI)

- Introducing our new Comms contractor Shelley Johnstone funded by SPARC BC and the City of Nanaimo.
- We do have a draft comms plan that is still going through some edits and discussion.
- Signy added that we are working on communications around who is doing what, including the Task Force, Coalition, COVID response, not COVID response work like Coordinated Access, etc. There is a desire from the community side from the downtown folks to get quicker information around addressing homelessness. We can certainly work better on communicating out but have to be mindful of not putting out delicate info prematurely.  
Jason added that we are being mindful of internal comms vs planning comms vs external comms, etc. There is some sensitive information that needs to be communicated to service providers that cannot be shared with the wider group. There is a sensitivity with all of the different levels around confidentiality as well. It is complex and will be working on it.
- Lisa added that the City works in partnership with the Government. We need to work as a whole community for shared understanding for people who need supportive housing and homeless people on the streets and what their needs are, to build awareness of what we do and how we do it. We need to see if there are some shared solutions instead of just frustration to help change the cultural narrative.
- Nicole said that there is a lot of ongoing comms work, including profiles of organizations, success stories and good news stories.
- For those that would like to have their Organization Profiles featured next please email or call Nicole
- Perhaps we could also do a monthly newsletter for NHC? We will send out a survey of what content you would like to receive.

#### 6. Pit Count update (Andrew, NJHS)

Highlights include:

- Homeless count is up 25% from the last count, to 429 people
- Very high number of people unsheltered in public spaces
- Most homeless people are from this community, almost 80%
- Only 5 PiT count were done before COVID all have been moved to Spring 2021.
- We may be able to do another one in Spring 2021 as well so that we have data for after COVID that will align with the rest of Canada.
- It is very difficult to get information on people in corrections and their plans after release

7. Round table: Service provider updates as time permits (or on open line after meeting)

- Carolyn Sampson asked who will be overseeing how the indigenous dollars are allocated and the response was - through the Allocation Committee. Julie Rushton, who is the Grant manager at United Way, is working with Inga at Tilicum Lelum as well as other organizations, around what their needs might be. We are happy to receive any other recommendations for off reserve indigenous options.
- Rhiannon from Literacy Central VI (Outreach programs) and Delaney (Youth programs), said that they do have some funds to develop some new programs and networking around literacy support for the homeless population. Delaney added that they do mobile youth outreach and personalized care packages with survival gear and supplies for folks from 12-29 – email Delaney at [youth@literacycentralvi.org](mailto:youth@literacycentralvi.org)

**Next Meeting June 4th, 10-12am ZOOM format**