



Nanaimo  
Homeless  
Coalition

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**Coalition Meeting**  
**10am - 12pm Feb 6th, 2020**  
**SARC Rm, City of Nanaimo**

In attendance:

Jason Harrison (CMHS), Yvonne Borrows (Salvation Army), Lisa Bhopalsingh (CoN), Karin Kronstal (CoN), Dave LaBerge (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), Violet Hayes (ICCS), Inga Cooper (Tillicum Lelum), Breeze Elliott (Tillicum Lelum), Theresa MacDonald (SEIA), Bernadette French (SD68), Kix Citton (NBIS), Laurie MacMillan (MP Assistant), Lois Peterson (Unitarian Shelter), Paul Sibley (Nanaimo Hospice), Gord Fuller (7-10 Club), Chantale Roelens (SEIA) Sara Couper (UWCNVI), Kim Maandag (Salvation Army), Steve Arnett (Indigenous Community Member) Dave Stewart (CoN), Erin Hemmens (City Councillor), Shelley Maunula (Haven), Rana Van Tuyl (Celebrate our Differences), Kix Citton (NBIS), Gillian Baker (VIMHS) Steve Arnett (indigenous member), Lisa Marie Barron (Trustee @Nanaimo Ladysmith PS), Virginia Fenton (JHS)

**Chair: Jason Harrison**

**Minutes:**

**1. MOTION to nominate Jason Harrison for Co-Chair**

- Moved by Violet Hayes    Seconded by Inga Cooper    **PASSED**

**2. Confirm minutes of December 5, 2019 Coalition meeting**

- **MOTION to accept minutes as presented**
- Moved by John McCormick    Seconded by Inga Cooper    **PASSED**

**3. Confirm agenda**

- Add into the agenda discussion around Rent Bank – 5.1
- **MOTION to accept the Agenda**
- Moved by Inga Cooper    Seconded by Violet Hayes    **PASSED**

**4. Reaching Home**

**a) Nanaimo Designated Funding**

- Allocations Committee Recommendation to contract to VIMHS for proposal on staff trainings for up to \$50,000 contract 2020-2021 (response to RFP)
- Also working with Jason, JHS and Homelessness services BC baseline training opportunity on an annual basis which is a requirement now
  - **MOTION to approve Allocation Committee Recommendations**
  - **PASSED**

b) Nanaimo Indigenous Funding

- Update on CE extension (Grace)
- The CE agreement with United Way has been renewed for a 2 year period, as it was set to end March 31, 2020. The department wanted to have time to engage with the Indigenous Community to see if there is an Indigenous Agency that would take on the role as CE for Indigenous funding. A consultant was hired but it is taking longer than anticipated as the work is being done in 16 communities. Therefore, Indigenous representatives were consulted and it was concluded to renew the agreement for 2 more years until March 31, 2022 to allow time to do meaningful and fulsome engagement. Currently all subprojects are ending March 31, 2020 and will need to be considered.
- Update on sub-agreement: *Young Mom's program, Tillicum Lelum*  
Breeze Elliot – C.O.O. - provided detailed information around the Young Mom's program.
  - The program houses young mothers 18-25 years of age, that experience homelessness or are at-risk. The program can house three mothers depending on occupancy of house. They assist with housing searches, life skills, parenting, etc. They have noticed recently an increase in mothers with multiple children and also more high risk moms. It is an alcohol and drug free house so there are some people that cannot be accommodated. There are also mothers that needs 24 hour supervision in order to keep their kids and this program cannot accommodate those mothers.
  - This year they have worked with 11 mothers and 14 kids and rehoused 9 of those mothers into independent housing.
  - Lisa asked – how hard is it to finding housing? Breeze replied that it takes 3 months to a year to find housing typically. The moms do not have enough income for regular housing, but subsidized housing is possible. Some move out of town and some move with friends and family. The program has assisted moms from Port Hardy to Victoria.

c) Allocations Committee Recommendation:

- that the Nanaimo Designated sub-projects be extended from September 30, 2020 to March 31, 2021
  - **MOTION to approve Allocation Committee Recommendation**
  - **PASSED**
- that the Nanaimo Indigenous sub-projects be extended for one year until March 31, 2021
  - **MOTION to approve Allocation Committee Recommendation**
  - **PASSED**
- Rationale: Given that all sub-agreements are on track to meet deliverables and given that we are awaiting the outcomes of Turner Strategies agreement and recommendations from the Task Force (expected in July) to set out the direction of future funding. Recommendation is to renew the IH sub-agreements for one year (to March 31, 2021) and renew the ND sub-agreements an additional 6 months (from September 30, 2020 to March 31, 2021) to ensure there are no gaps in services in the community and to allow sufficient time for an RFP/CFP process should it be required.

- Klx Citton – this year by year funding is difficult for all of us – can we move to 2 year funding model that doesn't get us into a year by year situation when we can?
- John McCormick – we took this on and run it on behalf of our community – we make planning decisions about every 4 years. There are a lot of moving parts right now and we need to decide as a community how do we best use the dollars.

#### 5. Nanaimo Health and Housing Task Force update

- Jason Harrison, Signy Madden, John McCormick, Kim Smythe all cross over between both the NHC and the HHTF committees. As of Jan 22, the HHTF has 6 more months to work in partnership with the Coalition, Service Canada and Turner Strategies looking at collecting information, systems mapping and social impact audit, with the results to be out in July. This will give us some guidance on gaps in our community and overlaps and what we can ask of the Federal and Provincial government. The Taskforce will be coming back to the Coalition with information and key decision points.

##### a) Turner Strategies update

- Starting in March, Turner Strategies will be holding Design Labs which are a type of workshop that is very focused, to come out with solutions on specific topics. The workshops are 2 hours long, with fairly intensive work being done.
- This will include working with some indigenous communities.
- Participation in the workshops is encouraged.
- The first design lab workshop is starting in the first week of March – stay tuned for invitation.

##### b) Recovery beds (Lisa)

- On the 19<sup>th</sup> the Taskforce will hear about funding for recovery beds. A proposal was put forward to provide more supports for our community and to fund some beds that are at the JHS society – a report will be coming back so we are hoping that we will have a positive outcome on that.

##### c) Rent Bank

- There was a RENT bank BC presentation in December. This program works as a stopgap loan or funds for utilities, but is not a grant. The funds are intended to help prevent people from becoming homeless. There is a lot of community participation in the Rent Bank process. Some organizations currently give grants that keep clients from homelessness (such as JHS and Salvation Army), however a Rent Bank is a different system and scope. We are interested in knowing what else already exists for like this in our community. Is this something we can start with and build on, on a broader level. We have information on how the Kamloops and the Vancouver Rent Banks work, and there are many options for how it can work.
- Some of the models show that over 50% goes to admin costs.
- There is some seed funding you can apply for but it is not enough to keep it going.
- Yvonne Borrows – The Salvation Army program is not a loan, as we feel it puts a lot of pressure on a client who is already struggling, so it is provided as a grant. There needs to be a lot more discussion around it as paying back a loan doesn't help people already in need but the concept is good.
- Inga Cooper – Is there any information around constantly chasing people to pay back the loans?
- Heidi Hartman – There are 2 societies in Victoria that do payment plans and for some people it is empowering to pay something back, so we may need a mixed response in this community based on peoples' circumstances.
- Gord Fuller to Lisa Bhopalsingh – Is any of this part of the affordable housing strategy?

Not as a specific rent bank but as an objective. Gord mentioned that perhaps we could partner with BC housing and really benefit the working poor.

- John McCormick – John Howard Society has a fund that is community built through fund raising that encompasses Loans and Grants. There has been great repayment of the loans as we put no time limit on repayment and even \$5/month is good, so we have had good success. It is just one piece of the puzzle.
- Chantale Roelens – SEIA has emergency funds as part of Reaching Home which are very specifically for rent and utilities. Clients have to exhaust all other measures first and they can only use the funds ones for up to \$500. There is, of course, some flexibility to the program. The combination of both loans and grants could work well together as there are some people that have to capacity to pay loans back.
- Lisa - Would we have the support of the Coalition at this stage to continue the discussion? **YES – it is worth exploring**
- Paul Sibley -The admin cost seems shockingly high – so it would be interesting to see what is actually going into this in the other programs.
- **JASON Harrison- We can send out a request through the Coalition to see who has some capacity to take on a piece of this work.**
- Paul - maybe there could be some in-kind work through financial institutions like Credit Unions?
- John McCormick - these are community supported projects that will require community work.
- Lisa Bhopalsingh - they will flesh out more details and bring it back to the HHTF.

#### 6. PiT Count update - Andrew Thornton (NRJHS)

- Andrew went through a Power point presentation that will be attached for you. This information has been gone over by all coordinators involved.
- There are some new survey questions:
  - One about child custody and foster care
  - Also “How long after foster care did you become homeless?”
  - And around acquired brain injury, thanks to Kix Citton (NBIS) and her work in pushing this to be included on the survey
  - One that shows the cultural bias that exists - What is the highest level of education that you completed – and now it includes an options for TRADES
- This survey is more around trends and patterns rather than detail and depth. It is much more streamlined than last time. It may look a bit longer but many of the questions are yes or no.
- BC housing has worked quite a lot to harmonize the provincial with the federal survey which is a good thing, as the data will be more consistent.
- The survey ends with the participant giving their opinion of what we can do to end homelessness.
- Questions with **CO** beside them won't go to the feds.
- The survey will take 5 to 15 minutes per person to do. We will need a lot of people to volunteer their time to make this happen – 50 volunteers plus 20 others from service agencies as well as the bicycle unit and the CIT response people.
- Magnet event is confirmed for St. Peters church – **Thurs March 12, 2020 10am-3pm.** It is the same venue as last time and it works quite well.
- Paul Sibley at Nanaimo Hospice has some people interested in participating.
- **Volunteers** are needed for doing surveys with people, putting together care packages, etc. - please contact Andrew Ferguson at JHS

- Donations are up and running and can be made at JHS 11am-3pm during the week (Closed 12-12:30pm)
- Sara Couper- NHC Comms – There are posters and social media asking for support as well as a press release that will go out next week, to open up the conversation on the PiT count. We are waiting for Federal approval before distributing materials.
- Andrew gave a big thanks to UW Comms Team!!
- For **Donations** –please contact Anne Marie Tosh at JHS – you can email pit@johnhowardnanaimo.org – 250-754-1266
- Volunteer training - March 5 6:30-8:30pm and March 7 10am-12pm at Park Avenue Elementary School. A big Thanks to Bernadette French for providing the space!!
- We are working on fixed sites for doing the surveys
- Question: Are we including people in the temporary modular housing? – No, but we will have a team outside there as well as canvas Beban park. CORE and RCMP will coordinate so that they don't survey the same people. Jason has maps of encampments that will be shared by outreach folks.
- The Magnet event will include:
  - CRA will be onsite to help with EI, CPP, SIN, etc.
  - Johnny the Barber will provide free haircuts,
  - There will be a story tellers project, Artistic Engagement or activity, and possible graphic reported and music
- The Pit Count is about the community so it will be interesting to see the overall response this time after the past 2 years
- For Coalition partners – contact Andrew Thornton or Andrew Ferguson if you would like to provide any information pamphlets and or brochures for the event
- Jason can donate some plywood for people to paint and display
- Literacy Central would like to provide a small free library for the day
- Andrew will be following up with all of the services providers around the shelter counts as well

#### 7. Communications update – Sara Couper (NHC Comms)

- NHC feature for last month was JHS and this month will be VIMHS. We are looking for more members to be featured.
  - **MARCH will be Paul Sibley (Nanaimo Hospice)**
  - **APRIL will be Nadia Boukhouali (MSDPR)**
  - **MAY will be Jason Harrison (CMHS)**
- We are always looking for Success stories as well so please share!
- Please share out info through your channels

#### 8. Review of Terms of Reference – Initial Discussion (Jason)

- This document was last reviewed in 2017, so it would be good to review again
- From the HHTF, there will be recommendations coming to us as a coalition, and we need to decide if we want to be active participants or passive participants and what our priorities will be. We don't really have a charter that is a summary of what we can get behind as a mission
- Inga Cooper – I haven't reviewed it recently, but would like to request a working group meeting to review and bring back to the Coalition with recommendations
- John McCormick– It is valuable when we all know where we are trying to get to and what the future destination looks like, so a smaller group discussion might be usefully
- Violet Hayes – It is important that we do think about what we are doing and have a plan for where we are going. We could be more action oriented as we do have clout and a

- wealth of experience at the table.
- Lisa Bhopalsingh – For the City the question is more around - How do we fit in a supportive role without ownership of it as we don't have that role.
- Kix Citton – just being on the Coalition has been beneficial for NBIS as we are now on the national stage and have a question on the PiT Count survey that wasn't there before, so we see this as real action coming out of the Coalition. The connections and synergy in this room is something to celebrate and be really proud of!
- Jason Harrison - Proper engagement is really important. If we refer something to a committee we need to have a process for everyone to weigh in and reflect back what they heard to the larger group. A TOR review committee may be the way to go as a good starting point. We need to be ready for June/July when recommendations come out of the HHTF to own our part of the work. We used to have a CAB and an activity group and we all came together but didn't always have a road map that we were following, so it may be time to hash out our position.
- Paul Sibley mentioned that he hasn't signed a code of conduct or confidentiality agreement, he just talked to Signy and showed up – this seems to be the same for a lot of people.
- We need to put some structure in place so that we can have the structure to make decisions and move forward in a timely manner.
- **MOTION** to create a committee to review the terms of reference
- Moved by John McCormick Seconded by Inga Cooper **PASSED**
- This committee will summarize what we are trying to do, send it out to the membership to see who wants to be involved – **contact Terra if you want to be involved in this committee**
- Yvonne, Grace, Violet, Inga, John volunteered to be part of this committee and the City can support by providing the space to meet.

#### 9. Agency Roundtable (All)

- Kim Maandag –**Salvation Army** had a Norwalk virus outbreak and had to shut down programs for a bit. We set up some programs outside the building so people could still receive food. We opened up our second floor so that ill folks could stay in bed and staff could take care of them – then we got the snow fall and were driving staff home late at night and picking up early in the morning so it's been a busy start to the year. We also now have haircuts for women as well as men; we have Service Canada come in once a week to work with people right on site on SIN numbers, CCP, etc.; we offer massages and foot care for both men and women; income tax returns for free 4 days a week; opened up 6 extra beds in the shelter for the winter and during the snow storm we had 9 people staying on mats on the floor to get out of the cold. We participated with the City to provide a warming center during the snow storm week. Bowen road thrift store has been revamped and we are also opening up a satellite community service location on second floor over top of the store. We will be starting with client interviews, small food hampers, income tax, community computers, and will build the services as we grow in hopes of offering everything that we have downtown.
- Inga Cooper – **Tillicum Lelum** is working on updating policies, strategic planning, fundraising and the school district framework around reconciliation. We raised \$5000 for hamper our program.
- Lois Peterson– **Unitarian Shelter** occupancy fluctuates since the other winter shelter is also open. We have literacy outreach in, every 2 weeks and the outreach workers are funded through Nanaimo foundation as of January 1, 2020.
- Chantale Roelens – **SEIA** (Women's Centre) We have been working on the amalgamation of 2 societies and it's a long process. Right now we are in a temporary

location in the community services building, in very tight quarters. However, we have found a location which is the same building as Co-dental on Wallace street. The owner will do all the labour to renovate the space, but we have to ask the community for materials. We've had a lot of support and hoping to be in our new space by the end of march.

- Paul Sibley – **Nanaimo Hospice** – Our Children's outreach vehicle is fully operational. We get lots of referrals to get the vehicle out in the community. We have about 40 kids and about 60 adults in counselling and wait lists for both.
- There is some interest in a 10 bed hospice – so we will see what happens with that – it would be a 3-5year project that we have submitted a briefing note for.
- Nadia Boukhouali - MSDPR – There are some January policy updates. Here is the link to the [SDPR January 1<sup>st</sup> Policy Updates](#).
- KIX Citton – **NBIS** – Thanks to Andrew Thornton for his PiT count work!
- Dave Stewart – **CoN** - Thanks to Salvation Army and Gord Fuller for helping setting up the warming center.
- Gillian Baker - **VIMHS** – looking forward to the training work for the community. Rosehill is cranking along with 23 new units. We are very busy with lots of waiting lists.
- Grace Kerr – **Service Canada** - Cowichan Valley is doing their PiT count on same day as Nanaimo. Please let me know if anyone needs Service Canada reps in to help out.
- Violet Hayes – **ICCS** - Reminder that the Coldest night of the year is Feb. 22, 2020. We were contacted by Box 221, regarding a project about changing perspectives. We came up with a photo contest, where 100-150 cameras will be going out to the homeless community. There will be judges and the photos will be up in 2 malls. For more information, please go to [changing perspectives.ca](#). This could be a big piece as we move forward, as we need to see homeless people as people. London drug to provide the cameras. Terra suggested VIOLET do a Community profile around this. At Newcastle Place – 22 units damaged from the fire will reopen. Samaritan house has had some ongoing issues but we got some help from SA with feeding people so thank you!
- Terra Kaethler – **UWCNVI** – I went to the BC trilateral meeting last week and Signy was in Ottawa at the Nation Community Entity forum for Designated and Aboriginal funding. We also received notice that we got a SPARC grant for \$44,000 for Communications work to support the work of Coordinated Access.
- **Meeting Adjourned**
- **Next Meeting March 5, 10-12am SARC Rm**