

**Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness  
General Coalition Meeting  
May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

**Attendees:** Bunny Shannon (CV Social Planning Society), Sandra Viney (DCBIA), Brooke (WorkBC), Francois Clavel (St. Vincent de Paul Society), Doug Hillian (City of Courtenay), Laura Busheiken (Islands Trust), Pat McKenna (Habitat for Humanity), Shari Dunnet (Community Action Team), Rachel Ducommon (John Howard Society), Roger Kishi (Wachiy Friendship Centre), Betty Tate (CV Early Years Collaborative), Leah Read (Mental Health & Substance Use), Janie Begin, Ann Janssen (CV Affordable Housing Society), Carrerra Teal (Chamber of Commerce), Katie Barker (CV Division of Family Practice), James Taylor (Glacierview Lodge), Karen McKinnon (Habitat for Humanity), Charlene Everson (Komoks First Nation), Joyce Wilson (St. George's United Church), Donna May (MSDPR), Krista Smith (CV Family Services), Destanee Harrison (CV Transition Society) Wendy Dyck (L'arche Comox Valley), Colleen Holden (Salvation Army), Louise Howes (CV Head Injury Society), mfemlinser

**Facilitator:** Richard Clarke, Coalition Leadership Team

**Recorder:** Andrea Cupelli, Coalition Coordinator

- 1. Leadership Team Membership interest for 2021-22 year**
  - a. Andrea to send email out with details
  - b. New members to be voted in by consensus at June meeting and then the new LT term starts in September
  - c. Currently meeting virtually every other week and email correspondence as required. LT brings forth recommendations to the Coalition.
  
- 2. Connect/Shelter**
  - a. Shelter operations extended til May 15<sup>th</sup>
  - b. Met with BC Housing to discuss further extension
  - c. Puntledge location fell through
  - d. Engaging with downtown businesses on concerns
  - e. Submitted Strengthening Communities Grant (1.2 million dollars) incl operation of Connect and overnight shelter.
  - f. City of Courtenay council passed a resolution for staff to look into continuation of shelter
    - i. Max capacity 10 mats due to fire code and BC Building code considerations
  - g. Lots of moving parts to continuing this service
  
- 3. Green and Inclusive Community Buildings Grant**
  - a. <https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/gicb-bcvi/index-eng.html>
  - b. Infrastructure Canada is currently accepting applications for retrofits and new building projects for community buildings.
  - c. This five-year \$1.5 billion program will support green and accessible retrofits, repairs or upgrades of existing public community buildings and the construction of new publicly-accessible community buildings that serve high-needs, underserved communities across Canada.

- d. Can't use the funds to purchase land or buildings, can't be used for housing or shelter.
- e. 100M is set aside for indigenous communities specifically. Rolling deadline of this 5 year program for projects under 3M.
- f. Projects between 3-25M have applications due July 6.
- g. Considerations that this could be an opportunity for Connect

#### **4. Meeting with Housing Minister David Eby – May 20**

- a. BC Housing, and both MLAs (Leonard and Osbourne) will be in attendance
- b. Opportunity to advocate for our Housing Proposal and to talk about current homelessness situation
- c. City of Courtenay also passed a resolution to arrange a meeting with David Eby and we may be all meeting together

#### **5. LLE Team Planning Group**

- a. Andrea looking for 4-5 people to help her plan best ways to establish an LLE team
- b. This is NOT a replacement for the LLE team or people planning how that team will operate – it is simply helping strategize how we will find and engage folks to participate and set up the first meeting.
- c. Would be great to have mentors (people already working with LLE) as well as people with current LE who want to be involved from the get-go
- d. Andrea will send email with details, please let her know if interested

#### **6. CVRD Poverty Reduction Plan Update**

- a. Community Engagement phase has been completed and a report has been written
- b. Was disappointed in the lack of engagement with people with lived experiences of poverty
- c. There will be a “Game Changer” workshop with local government leaders, key decision makers and decision influencers to work on the region's top priorities to reduce poverty by 25% by 2025.
- d. CV Social Planning Society recently had a presentation on Universal Basic Income and this could be useful to include in the plan – advocating on a Federal level

#### **7. HRT Update**

- a. Encampments on the rise – increase in notifications from the City – up 40% over 2019
- b. Shout out to the staff at Connect, the motel, and all of our outreach staff from other agencies for all of their hard work during this dual health crisis. Everyone is exhausted but doing all they can to help. Grateful for this team and the work they do for our community.
- c. CAT Update
  - i. Overdose Advisory was on for 2 weeks in the Comox Valley. Increase in drug poisoning due to the toxic supply.
    - 1. Advisory was called off in our community only and CAT is connecting with Island to find out why/how they track their data

- ii. Hosting a virtual meeting for frontline workers to talk about the drug poisoning crisis, offer support, advocacy etc
- iii. Drug testing strips and Brave app programs are still operating
- iv. Shout out to Wachiay for hosting an excellent workshop on Decolonizing Harm Reduction
- v. Question about what to do with expired vials of Naloxone?
  - 1. Vials can be exchanged at AVI and/or the OPS on England Ave
- vi. Reminder that Naloxone doesn't work on benzos, and much of the drug supply seems to have high levels of benzos in them
- vii. Note about the lack of supervised inhalation sites, doesn't exist in the Comox Valley and many people inhale alone.

## **8. Other Updates**

### **a. Habitat for Humanity**

- i. Public Hearing on Campbell River project – lots of neighbor opposition (parking/density concerns). If you are a Campbell River resident and able to write a letter of support please consider
- ii. Looking for families for an accessible 2 bedroom home – if you know anyone please contact Karen McKinnon  
[karenm@habitatnorthisland.com](mailto:karenm@habitatnorthisland.com)

### **b. Grateful to Charlene Everson for representing Komoks First Nation!**

### **c. Komoks First Nation**

- i. Folks experiencing homelessness have been camping out on or near the reserve.
- ii. Guardians have been cleaning up the garbage
- iii. Andrea reminded everyone that part of the Strengthening Communities Grant would go towards clean-up costs – including KFN.

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 2, 2021 12pm via Zoom**