

**Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness**  
**Monthly Agenda**  
**September 8, 2021**

**Facilitator: Betty Tate**  
**Recorder: Angela Fletcher**

**1. Welcome Back**

- a. New Coordinator- Angela Fletcher

**2. Unhoused Society Presentation**

- a. Introduced founders- Sam Franey and Sophia Kasanikakis
  - i. Sam and Sophia moved to the Valley 2 years ago
  - ii. Both have lived experiences struggling with addictions
  - iii. Sam spent 3 years on the streets; had such high anxiety that he could not get to the services that may help him.
- b. The Unhoused Society became a member agency this year.
  - i. The Unhoused Society was formed through talking with other people on the streets.
  - ii. The Society will aid those with lived experiences by offering recovery programs based on individual need in conjunction with tiny-home living all on one campus of care.
  - iii. The idea is that a person will work on their recovery while building a place to call home. The tiny- home will eventually be theirs to own.
  - iv. Once through the program, the person is encouraged to assist others. They can continue living on the property and access help as well as assist in helping others.
  - v. Unhoused society could provide space for unhoused seniors as well.
- c. Sophia is now the executive director.
  - i. Website: [unhoused.ca](http://unhoused.ca).
- d. Looking for partnerships and land opportunities.
  - i. They have plans to apply for funding and have access to some potential grants.
  - ii. Bylaws and building regulations are creating barriers. Sam has been in contact with planners.
  - iii. Bob Wells mentioned that Councillors aren't always the best people to know all the development protocols and suggested that Sam approach city staff with regards to building codes.
  - iv. When asked if the container homes at Maple Pool compare, Sam stated, the intent is "how best to empower someone to get their life back" and that contributing to and owning a place to call home adds significant motivation.

- v. Sam acknowledged that if the tiny homes were mobile, it would help with regulations as tiny homes are considered too small to be liveable. The positive being that the tiny homes can be more easily moved if necessary.

### **3. Community Foundations Grants- Richard**

- a. The Community Foundation requested that the Coalition administer 75 000/ year in housing needs grant money for the CVCF. The Foundation is revamping their granting system moving away from making decisions and passing it on to the expert groups. This is a 3- year pilot project.
- b. After meeting with Susan Aucherlonie, from the Comox Valley Community Foundation, to discuss details
- c. The leadership team is in support of administering the grant and is bringing the item to the Coalition for vote.
- d. Considerations:
  - i. Funds are for housing needs only
  - ii. To start this fall and used by Mar 2022
  - iii. Flexibility on how this works. Some options include:
    - a) To use the CVCF grant processing system
    - b) CVCF will take in applications and to then provide them to us.
    - c) To use CVCF services to move all funds so that the money never leaves the Foundation until it is allocated to an organization leaving the burden off the Coalition
    - d) The Foundation can provide cheques directly on the Coalition's behalf
- e. Susan spoke to the need for housing in the Comox Valley and acknowledged that housing is the number one issue in the eyes of our community.
- f. The Community Foundation grants will now be divided into:
  - i. 75 000 housing needs
  - ii. 20 000 non- profit training- sustainability and development
  - iii. 50 000- to adults with Diverse abilities
  - iv. 130 000- in regular community grants.
- g. In the past, there has not been a high number of applicants for housing
- h. Andrea Cupelli asked if an administrative fee would be included. Susan answered that it was 75 000 and the Coalition could decide what to do with it.
- i. The Leadership team was looking for a consensus vote. With a majority vote for yes, the Coalition will agree to work with the Community foundation to grant \$75 000 to our community for housing needs.

### **4. Strengthening Communities Grant**

- a. Received just over 1 000 000 from the Union of BC Municipalities in a Strengthening communities grant. The grant was a covid response and offers funding to go towards the expansion of the Connect program.

- b. Letter was composed and was presented to the city requesting the extension of the use Cliffe Ave Connect building. An extension was granted from October 5, 2021, until the end of November 2021. Further details are being worked out.
- c. New staff will be hired and hours of Connect will be extended starting this week.
- d. Funding to be used by the end of October 2022
- e. This is a temporary solution while we work towards more permanent solutions.
- f. We need City support to make this happen.
  - i. Staff are hard to hang onto when we are not sure how long the position is for. Shari Dunnet reiterated this point stating it is hard on the staff not knowing as well as the homeless population.
  - ii. We are approved for cold weather shelters starting October 1.
  - iii. EWR provides funding for some shelter beds from October to March. The strengthening Communities Grant can compliment this funding.
  - iv. Doug Hillian said that he cannot see the City evicting Connect come the end of November but needs time to look at the whole picture.
    - i. He prefers a more effective space and hopes BC Housing will help with a purpose- built building. There is pressure to move from the community.
    - ii. Question (Doug): Was there funding in the grant for clean-up?
    - iii. Answer (Heather): Clean-up was not funded under the UBCM grant.
    - iv. Question (Doug): Could funding be provided to augment peer-support clean-up?
    - v. Heather: Clean-up is in discussion, and we will follow-up.
    - vi. Shari Dunnet: CAT outreach does do clean-ups.
    - vii. The Broken Unchain group has organized a clean-up for this week.

## **5. Vaccination Passports**

- a. We are aware that the passports could cause issues for our most vulnerable.
- b. We are working with public health and other agencies to figure out the best system.
- c. Tracy from the Transition Society put together a current protocol document that will be shared.

## **Updates**

### **6. Team recruitment**

- a. Teams being formed: People living and with lived experiences and Public Awareness.
- b. Email Angela if interested: [comoxvalleyhousing@gmail.com](mailto:comoxvalleyhousing@gmail.com).

### **7. Leadership team changes**

- a. We were sad to say good-bye to Richard who will be stepping down from the leadership team. Thank-you Richard for all you have done for our community. You are a true asset and will be thoroughly missed.
- b. Andrea Cupelli and Chris Bate will be joining the leadership team. Welcome to Andrea and Chris. We look forward to working with you.

## **8. Agency Updates**

- a. Bill Webb- Courtenay Legion
  - i. Please contact if you know of a senior veteran needing housing. Bill requested that if you see someone new on the streets, ask if they have served.
  - ii. They received an 18 000 grant for a research project.
- b. Shari Dunnet- Community Action Team
  - i. Drug supply remains extremely toxic; There has been an advisory issued for the last 3 weeks.
  - ii. The Comox Valley has a higher number of overdoses than the average Island rate
  - iii. We are hoping for more thorough drug testing
  - iv. Thanks to all those that supported Overdose Awareness Day.
  - v. Peer projects are beginning. Shari will share as they progress.