

Comox Valley Coalition to End Homelessness
General Coalition Meeting Agenda
March 4th, 2020

Attendees: Catherine Thompson (Downtown Courtenay Business Improvement Association), Wendy Dyck (L'arche Comox Valley), Joyce Wilson (St. George's United), Trish Holm (CV Transition Society), Ellen Strong Klassen (Strong Centre), Shari Dunnet (Community Action Team), Pat McKenna (Habitat for Humanity/Town of Comox), James Taylor (Glacierview Lodge), Betty Tate (CV Social Planning Society/CV Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of BC), Doug Hillian (City of Courtenay), Nancy Carlson (Salvation Army), Julia Doknjas (Wachiay Friendship Centre), Roger Kishi (Wachiay Friendship Centre), Matt Landry (MLA Ronna-Rae Leonard), Stephanie McGowan (Town of Comox), Lumi Van Grootheest (NIC Nursing Student), Louise Howes (CV head Injury Society), Julie Keumbehdjian (CV Community Health Network), Chantelle Hunter (NIC Nursing Student), Jesslyn Bradbury (NIC Nursing Student), Ashley Closs (NIC Nursing Student), Ashley Dicus (Today N Tomorrow Learning Society), Zoe Steed (Today N Tomorrow Learning Society), Ashley Hancock (AVI), Drue Weller (NIC Nursing Student), Donna May (Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction), Ed Patterson (Vortex), Sam Franey (concerned citizen), Danille Davies (CV Transition Society)

Facilitator: Richard Clarke (Dawn to Dawn)

Recorder: Andrea Cupelli (Coalition Coordinator)

1. Warming Centre Update

- a. Lease ends March 31st, 2020
- b. City of Courtenay Delegation – no date yet
- c. Writing a letter to Council to ask for a one year lease
- d. Letters of support from partners encouraged
- e. RCMP says there has been a reduction in calls to library by 50% since Warming Centre opened
- f. 50 people through the doors a day
- g. VIVRs is a new partner
- h. Donations of coffee, tea, snacks, baked goods are accepted – stop by 1-5pm or call the Transition Society to arrange
- i. Hired a new staff member – Ryan who will be connecting and getting familiar with local services
- j. Good group of volunteers right now

2. March 11th Point in Time Count Update

- a. One week to go!!
- b. Extended Count happening Mar 12-16 if your organization wants to fill out surveys
- c. Volunteer training has happened, outreach routes have been set and we are ready to go
- d. Self-care Event with chiropractors, hairdressers etc happening at Connect 1-4pm followed by BBQ 4-6pm to wrap up the day and thank participants.

3. Homelessness Response Team Update

- a. We have been funded by CV Community Foundation to start a Speakers Bureau - train interested people with lived experience on public speaking/story telling/advocating
- b. Looking into a Market/Vendors table at the Summer markets where people with lived expertise can sell their craft etc
- c. Team is working on Terms of Reference/Protocols/Confidentiality Agreements in the Spring
- d. PWLE continue to receive honorariums for another 2 months - would love to keep this going.

4. OPS Closure/March

- a. Shari - Project Coordinator for CAT Update
 - i. Funds to do some projects after knowing what is needed
 - ii. Outreach Coordinator - Patti Alvarado, Unbroken Chain - doing the outreach for families and those using
 - iii. Looking to hire some Peer Advisors - honorarium for participation - 2 spaces
 - iv. AVI - beginning phases of meeting with community needs/ideas in response to OD crisis and come together next month to come up with a coordinated response
- b. OPS Closure
 - i. Trying to get clarity on what is being put in its place
 - ii. What can we do to support?
 - iii. Looking to other communities for their examples
 - iv. Concerns about impact - letters of support directed to Environmental Health Office in Comox Valley
 1. Keep asking questions
 2. Be specific on the need for Supervised Consumption
 3. Perhaps there is a way to create a Pop-up safe injection site
 - a. VORTEX is looking into this
 4. Lives are being saved and not being reported
- c. Grant Shilling is looking to organize a march starting at the Warming Centre and going to Island Health Medical Offices on March 10th at 2pm
 - i. Make people aware that OPS is closing, no alternative so advocating for this
 - ii. Connect will be closed while the march happens
- d. OPS site closes March 31st but AVI itself is not closed. Lots of rumours in the community that it is closing.
- e. What is remaining at AVI?
 - i. office will offer harm reduction supply distribution and collection and training, convos on how to safely use substances
 - ii. Monday-Thursday 9-4 Friday 11-3, no longer able to offer those services on the weekend
 - iii. Still offering support for clients with HEP C, HIV

5. 5 Year Plan Update

- a. **Year 5 \$150k was approved by CVRD at board meeting on Feb 11th as recommended** with no discussion on the 3 levels of funding we made recommendations for.
 - i. \$90k – D2D
 - ii. \$45k – CVTS
 - iii. \$10k – Habitat
 - iv. \$5k – Wachiay
 - v. \$60k rolled over for Warming Centre
- b. **Warming Centre – CVTS is requesting to use \$10k of CVRD HSS Funds** to cover the cost of camera system, dog crates, kitchenware/furnishings/coffee urns, signage, water dispenser, building materials, locksmith, panic buttons, labour for repairing donated furniture, putting up shelving, painting, moving and assembling donated furniture and fixtures
 - i. **Total: 7945.08**
 - ii. Still need to build smoking alcove etc - there will be more upcoming expenses hence asking for 10k of the 60k allotted to drop-in centre
 - iii. **Approved by consensus by meeting attendees**
 - iv. Andrea to write a letter to CVRD to request these funds to be released
 - v. City of Courtenay has put in a lot of capital costs, new doors, kitchen etc
- c. **Service Review of HSS Fund happening sometime in the Spring**, so may have the opportunity to talk about increasing the HSS annual requisition then

6. Housing Needs Assessment Update

- a. **Tuesday, March 10th 8:30am at CVRD boardroom** – Coalition members invited to review the first draft of the Housing Needs Report and offer feedback
- b. Results will be shared with public in April and the CVRD will be hosting public events to share the report with the community in the future

7. DCBIA/RCMP Meeting Update

- a. Well attended meeting
- b. RCMP did some myth-busting and did an outstanding job reminding folks that homelessness is a multifaceted issue, and is not a crime
- c. Gave great recommendations to business owners on how to stay safe and what to do to deter crime and nuisances
- d. Reminder that RCMP is under limited resources and they cover a huge geographical area
- e. Relationship between RCMP and outreach has vastly improved since the opening of the Warming Centre, and they talked about the benefits of this space at the meeting
- f. DCBIA writing a press release to talk about the positive meeting and provide an explanation of the survey results that were released that painted a negative picture of downtown Courtenay
- g. City staff will investigate the possibility of a Portland Loo (24/7 self-cleaning washroom) somewhere downtown

8. Seniors Housing Update

- a. Students have created 2 separate plans for the Glacierview Lodge site
 - i. Affordable Housing for Seniors only
 - ii. Affordable Multi-generational Housing
- b. The plans will be posted on the GVL website in April and shared with those who attended the open house, design charette etc
- c. The plans are higher density rather than sprawling and can be developed in phases
- d. Will need funding from Federal and Provincial governments to make this happen
- e. Co-op Housing could be one of the main models
 - i. BC Cooperative Housing Federation will come walk the site

9. Community Housing Transformation Centre Grant

- a. Is anyone from the Coalition applying for any of these funding streams?
 - i. D2D is thinking about it
- b. The grant is currently undersubscribed
 - i. 2 streams; organizational transformational change and tenant relations
- c. Should the Coalition apply?
- d. Still haven't heard from Feds re: Designated Community Expansion status
 - i. Have connected with MPs about it, waiting to hear back

10. Coldest Night of the Year Results

- a. \$105,000 was raised – over \$100,000 target!!

11. RENT Conference – April 16th Nanaimo

- a. Andrea will send out the registration link/info
- b. Andrea to be on lunchtime panel with Victoria Coalition, Aboriginal Coalition and Nanaimo Coalition on building partnerships, creating awareness in community

12. BC Rent Bank Presentation and grant opportunity

- a. BC Rent Bank is coming to Campbell River Apr 2 to give presentation on their organization at 1pm after CR Coalition Meeting. Andrea will send details once she knows more
- b. There is also a small grant available (up to 5k) for regions interested in exploring whether a rent bank would work. There is a preference that BC Rent Banks are regional and not organization based.
 - i. CVTS has inquired into starting one and so was connected back to Coalition to discuss further
- c. Leadership Team will explore BC Rent Bank and Transformation Grant as Coalition initiative?

13. Comox Public Hearing for 695 Aspen Rd – March 5th 7:30pm at Comox Rec Centre

- a. Coalition will be writing a simple letter on the benefits of increased rental housing in the community
 - i. General letter of support for increased housing in the Valley
 - ii. Email by 4pm tomorrow afternoon
- b. Feel free to write letters, attend to support
- c. Lots of people against, lots of people for, those against are the most vocal

- d. The build is Highstreet Developments
 - i. 4 storeys, 340 units, with some earmarked as affordable housing
- e. There is a need for market rental housing in the Comox Valley especially for the middle income, single people, elderly etc

14. Renters Rights (TRAC) Workshop – Mar 13th 1-3pm

- a. Will be focused on Rental Tenancy Agreement rights – repairs, wrongful evictions etc

15. Other Updates

- a. **Strong Centre**
 - i. launch day is in 2 weeks
 - ii. 20 volunteers trained as advocates to fill service gap
 - iii. Social workers, psych nurses, drs, and counsellors who will be advising the volunteers
 - iv. More info coming soon on how to refer clients
 - v. strongcentre.org or Facebook page under Strong Centre
- b. **Wachiay Friendship Centre Workshops**
 - i. Apr 7 10-2 L&L Rent Smart Session
 - 1. Please register with Leslie because limit to # of people to come
 - ii. Mental Health First Aid
 - 1. Apr 23 and 24 – Fee \$175
- c. **Habitat for Humanity**
 - i. Final foundations on Lake Trail Rd are being poured
 - ii. Then time to start on the 1375 Piercy build
- d. **VORTEX Outreach**
 - i. New peer-led outreach team
 - ii. Providing harm reduction supplies, toques and socks

Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 1st, 2020 12-1pm at the Courtenay Library in the meeting room