



Coalition Meeting 10am - 12pm Nov.7, 2019 SARC Rm, City of Nanaimo

In attendance:

Dave LaBerge (CoN), Lisa Bhopalsingh (CoN), Karin Kronstal (CoN), Grace Kerr (Service Canada), Signy Madden (UWCNVI), Kevin Flood (Nanaimo RCMP), Andrew Thornton (JHS), John McCormick (JHS), Heidi Hartman (BC Housing), Yvonne Borrows (The Salvation Army), Jeannine Bousquet (MSDPR), Alexis Petersen (Harewood Neighbourhood House), Karly Fennell (IH), Terra Kaethler (UWCNVI), Nicole Benson (UWCNVI), Emily Sorensen (UWCNVI), Corrie Corfield (ICCS), Inga Cooper (Tillicum Lelum), Theresa MacDonald (SEIA), Bernadette French (SD68), Rana Van Tuyl (Celebrate our Differences), Paul Manly (MP - Green Party), Kix Citton (NBIS), Jason Harrison (CMHA), Nadia Boukhouali (MSDPR), Andrew Ferguson (JHS), Kim Smythe (Chamber of Commerce), Laurie MacMillan (MP Assistant), Lisa McHaffie (Service Canada), Lyne Coderre (JHS), Taryn O'Flanagan (VIMHS), Shelly Maunula (Haven Society)

Co-Chairs: Yvonne Borrows (Salvation Army) and Jeannine Bousquet (MSDPR)

Minutes:

1. **Confirmed minutes** of October 3, 2019 Coalition meeting
2. **Confirmed agenda** - Called for new items
 - None added
3. **Health and Housing Task Force update** - Lisa Bhopalsingh (CoN)
 - The Health and Housing Task Force is in effect until June of next year to move the dial on HHTF and Coalition plans in affordable housing. We've had several meetings that included different agencies and systems mapping. Last week, on October 29, we had an in-Camera facilitated session. People in this room that were there are Signy Madden, Lisa McHaffie, Kim Smythe, Jason Harrison, John McCormick and Heidi Hartman and myself. On November 13 it will be proposed that the members make a motion to have the info released publicly and then we can share the decisions with you. It's a process and will take time to move the dial but this is a good step in relationship building and helping to support the agencies on the ground. We would like to give a shout out to the Chamber for their work and support.
 - John McCormick added that we are open to discussion about what we are trying to do to help the community.
 - Yvonne Borrows asked if the HHTF is looking at strategies to help connect the

agencies in the community – YES – adopting a systemic way for us to work together to address the issues is a priority.

- Signy Madden added that other communities have already tackled these issues and are 2-3 years ahead of where we are now. We are trying to attract as much funding as we can and use current example to see what might work in our community; how we are going to need to each make changes to implement coordinated access, so that we can operate better together. We are looking forward to the recommendations from the in camera session, so people can see what we have been working on.
- Lisa Bhopalsingh (CoN) – the Coalition has ramped up its presence thanks to Nicole Benson from United Way and her team and sustaining that momentum is part of the bigger conversation. There might have been concern that the TF might have made the Coalition redundant, but I think it has only enhanced it.
- Kim Smythe added that incredible progress was made in those 5 hours with a facilitator.
- Yvonne Borrows asked if the meeting will be made available as a transcript? Lisa is not sure yet but will make sure the outcomes are circulated to the Coalition.
- Nicole Benson will get the outcome details and make a post on the web page and social media and asks other agencies to read it and share it out as well on their social media.
- Lisa McHaffie (Service Canada) has experience with Kelowna's Journey Home Task Force, which has a 5year plan with action items. We are making progress with that and Lisa is happy to share that information with this community and is honoured to be on the Nanaimo HHTF. Lisa added that we are connected with other 60 communities across Canada that receive RH Funds, and are all at different levels of Coordinated Access. We can learn and share best practices so that we are not reinventing the wheel. Lisa oversees the funding for AB and BC for Designated and Indigenous Funds.

4. Reaching Home Updates

a) Allocations Committee Update Terra Kaethler (UWCNVI)

Please refer to AC committee meeting minutes that were attached to agenda.

Budget update: There is \$112K in the budget

- \$25K allocated to PIT count
- \$13K Helpseeker
- \$50K towards staff training
- \$20K towards consultant
- -\$4K unallocated
- **MOTION** to support \$40K of the 2020 Reaching Home budget to go towards the consultant contract to work with the Coalition and Taskforce on developing a Coordinated Access system. Moved – Jason – KIM S second - **PASSED**

Staff Training RFP update: RFP coming out soon.

- Jason and Taryn are putting together a proposal around staff training. It will be 6 month rotating training – one session every month – rotating CORE training for all of the agencies.
- They will likely have something to present at the December meeting.
- Heidi with BC housing as well as Island Health, are already offering training to their staff, so we may be able to partner with some of that.
- When UWCNVI did the Housing First Training, we opened it up to other communities past Nanaimo as well, so may want to do that.

AC committee recommends that we extend current Nanaimo Designated RH contracts for 6 months so that they align with the process the Taskforce is undergoing and we will know what our priorities are like moving forward. We can vote on it in December but RH funded agencies will present on their progress today.

- Signy Madden – point of information - RH funds come to the Coalition to be voted on while other funding we make recommendations on. The 2 sources of RH funding are Designated and Indigenous.

b) Presentations for sub-committee project

Housing First and Non-Housing First- John McCormick (JHS)

- Lyne Coderre and Andrew Ferguson (JHS) will give brief presentations on Housing First and Non-Housing First projects. Theresa MacDonald will report on SEIA's project.
- We took on this community project and have had that in mind as we run this program. Decisions are made through a community process to try to house people with a view to long term and better tenancy.
- Signy added that the Coalition did have a consultant come in a few years ago to discuss the subcontracts. We have been funding the Housing First project for almost 5 years.
- **Andrew Ferguson – JHS Housing First** program is a private market and supportive housing program that works with service providers that work with homelessness people. We do assessments with chronically or episodically homeless people; work with them to identify their housing goals; work through the housing process; provide case management supports and then continue through with the plan that works best for them.
- Last quarter we secured housing for 3 people, 5 people reached their milestones and 2 have been housed for 2 yrs. We have worked with others as well. The front line staff know that housing tends to come in waves. Last year most of our housing came from 3 land lords. There are more outside that initial circle this year with some new landlords taking over some properties. This year we don't get as many call backs as in previous years but we are working to cultivate some relations with new land lords.
- In the past year tenancies seem to be stabilizing and staying put for over a year. We are doing fewer of our own vulnerability assessments, as more people have been trained in the past few years. We provide ongoing case management, transportation to medical appointments and foodbanks, help with other transitions that occur. In total since program started we've house just over 40 people in either private market or supportive housing.
- John McCormick added that there is more affordable housing inventory coming onto the market in the next 2 years which will make it somewhat easier for us to house people. Relationships are critical with landlords, as they need to understand who they are housing and we need to support the land lords to understand who they are housing. There was a question of if JHS holds the tenancy agreements? John responded - sometimes we do, but we work to pass that along to the participant being housed.
- Jason Harrison– What is your ongoing case load and how many staff? We have 15 active cases currently with 1-full time case manager, 1-part time outreach

- worker and some of Andrews hours as well. Some of the participants have move to BC housing. There was a question of if the units are dedicated to Housing First participants to move people into and out of? Yes, sometimes it works that way.
- Karin Kronstal added that the average 1bedroom at \$850-\$900 is what we try and work with Andrew on. The types of accommodations are Bachelor suites, basement suites, 1 bedrooms and secondary suites.
 - Signy Madden asked if we can get the names of the landlords to share with the Chamber to thank them for taking on this work in hopes of increasing relationships?
 - John McCormick acknowledged the roll that the city has played in providing subsidies for housing people in crisis. We've learned a lot from doing this for the past 4.5 years and the market trends have changed a lot in that time.
 - Yvonne Borrows added that the Salvation Army does HF funded by their own donors and wondered if anyone else doing it? John said, not that he knows of. Salvation Army has a case load of about 40 people with 1 staff member working on it. 40 in market rental subsidies of \$375/month. It is important to highlight that this is happening and through coordinated access we will bring together all of this info into one place.
 - John did have a client who was manipulated by a landlord out of housing and went to arbitration. This client was 40yrs active in extreme addiction – we got him stabilized, ceased addiction, got part time work, cleaned up his life. We lost the challenge because the arbitrator decided that we and the tenant weren't believable. We now house this person in our own building and it is terrific but imaging trying to house someone that we are not backing. There needs to be sensitivity training in dealing with situations like this.
 - **Lyne Coderre (JHS) Non-Housing First:** VI Therapeutic community working with 4 mo- 1yr homeless people or at risk of Homelessness. The goal is to transition to independent living and relief of addiction. 2 people have gone back to school, 2 completed job training, we transitioned 2 to permanent housing. We provide outreach service, transportation, life skills, budgeting, nutrition, relapse prevention, recognizing what needs to change. We work with Tillicum Lelum, Citizens Advocacy, Mental Health and Addictions services. Some of the shifts that we've seen are less removals from program and increase in people moving on in a positive way. Due to the OPIOD crisis we have also had to adapt to new therapies.
 - Gladys Brewster can provide more outreach service to people as they are supportive recovery housing. Hoping to get some more Gladys Brewster type housing.
 - We get about 15 referrals every 2 weeks and we have a list of about 30 people at the moment.
 - In 2018-2019, we had 34 clients into the program and 26 are still permanently housed.
 - Grace Kerr asked if this program is this specific to men, and the answer was YES. John McCormick added, we are hoping to expand it and am open to suggestions. The goal is for sober living, and many participants become model citizens and contribute to the community. They experience a remarkable change to their lives. VIHA owns Gladys Brewster house and we are able to us that as secondary stage housing.

- **Theresa MacDonald - Tenancy Support with SEIA** – my caseload is more homeless people that drop into the Women’s Centre. We check on their BC housing application, and check with family members regarding housing. We have no budget for transportation. She would like to meet with others that do this work as Theresa is new to this job and to Nanaimo. We have 3 of the 7 people housed still in their housing places, not in places with great landlords unfortunately, but there is no place else to send them so they get stuck where they are. It is a challenge, but there are some bright stories of assisting some people and make their lives better. Treat people like humans and they will respond in a human way. That vulnerable assessment training, is that for everybody?
Jason Harrison responded that it will likely be the common assessment tool and we should get an updated list of who is VAT trained in our community.
Taryn O’Flanagan will distribute who is trained.
- If people want supportive housing they will have to have a VAT done as it is a good tool to assess where somebody might be at and it also brings up topics that bring up other discussions, so one needs to decide when and where we do VATs.
- Signy added that this will all be address with Coordinated Access, to see who is doing what and where the overlap is – it’s going to take time but we will get there.

c) Indigenous Consultation update (Lisa McHaffie, Service Canada)

- We are committed to truth and reconciliation and will engage with committee members to see if there is interest in taking over the RH Indigenous funding. There are 16 communities to conduct these consultation processes in. The consultations are ongoing and will spill into next year and possibly the following year as well. It cannot be rushed and needs to be considerate of the communities we are working in and of the capacities of the agencies we work with. There will be no interruption of service and the process for Nanaimo should be starting in the new year.
- Signy added that Tillicum Lelum has been funded for 19 years federally – There was a CFP put out 3 years ago. The Coalition recommended continuing funding.
- There have been clear processes and choices made over the last few years. UWCNVI has been the Community Entity since 2009. This conversation is around if an indigenous agency will take over as the Community Entity for Indigenous funding through Reaching Home/

5. PiT Count update - Andrew Thornton (JHS)

- Andrew went to the Calgary Western Canada PiT Coordinator Workshop, attended by Designated community coordinators and people from BC housing. The good news is we are slightly ahead of some communities, as we have the JHS housing team that will execute the count in Nanaimo and they have experience from doing it in the past. The emphasis is really that this is a community activity and community effort. In Vancouver they use 1200 volunteers deployed to use in all facets, such as, collecting donations and public education, as well as people helping out on the actual day.
- Also if we think we have issues in scale, in Yellow Knife they have 65,000 km for their PiT count with a migratory population.
- The importance of the data is the accuracy and repetition of the information and the goal is to further tighten up the consistency and the complexity of the data at a national and local level and ongoing harmonization on a national level. I will also be helping out in the Duncan PiT count, and am hoping to generate a regional report to get a picture of what is going on between Duncan and Nanaimo. This time the data will be

more or less the same but harmonization between regions so that we will get a comprehensive picture of what is happening. There are 2 more shelters open in Nanaimo since the last count. The PiT count date will be at the end of March.

- There are 82 encampment locations in our community currently, and 25-30 people aren't leaving those spots so we will go to each of these locations during the count, so it will be a much more comprehensive look.
- Inga Cooper - do we ask if they are attached to a physician? The answer was No. Inga sit on the Physician network and they need some data to support their vulnerable clients, so it would be good to capture this as well. It's a complicated issue with 2 newer clinics moving farther out, transportation is an issue.
- CORE Questions on the survey are unchangeable but on some you can add sub-questions. There is a community based question area. They have spent years developing these questions. Andrew has CORE question or Federal but not Provincial one as of yet. The question of how many people are on social assistance would be good to know as well.
- Jason Harrison added that the data is needed to inform decision making but you need the people to inform and understand the context behind the numbers.
- Signy acknowledged Melaina Patenaude as she pushed for the Cowichan Region PiT count with provincial funding. It will hopefully be done within the same week as the Nanaimo count. Andrew added that for public education, there is a series of videos that have been produced and can be added on to the website; media promotions as well will be done at the time. We will hold a magnet event, with musicians and things to do to attract people to feel part of a community instead of a clinic feel to it.

6. Communications update Nicole Benson (UWCNVI)

- **MOTION** to adopt the Communications Strategy that was sent out a month ago Moved by Jason Harrison and Seconded by Kim Smythe - **PASSED**
- Thank you to everyone for participating in the Homelessness Action Week, there were some really great events.
- Participation is really key to getting our message out. The folks in this room need to share and contribute in order for us to be successful.
- Karin Kronstal - re: success stories from GABRIOLA – there are recorded stories of success from Gabriola, can we share those as well? Yes, we want good local content but all success stories are good to share. Moving and relevant stories are always good to share.
- When you have success stories, we want to share those out, but we only have so many resources to get the stories so I need the agencies to feed those to us please.
- We want to showcase agencies that are part of the Nanaimo Homeless Coalition in feature stories. We would like to do this once a month and are looking for the first few agencies that we can interview and work with on stories: John McCormick (JHS), Taryn O'Flanagan (VI Mental Health) and Jason Harrison (CMHA) all came forward – so thank you!!
- Signy suggested that they say what they do on the Coalition and why it matter that they are here. This is to help to educate the public on the good work that is already happening.
- We did our first Agency showcase with Kix Citton from Nanaimo Brain Injury Society.
- The Over Dose prevention guide is something that we sponsored and we have some here to share.
- Vital signs launches tonight at the Port Theatre with a public event that the United Way sponsored. The City of Nanaimo and Island savings sponsored it as well.

- There will be information about it on the Nanaimo foundation website and our website.
- There is a much larger data set than what is published in the report. SPARC BC was contracted to pull the data together. We will share the information with you and ask that you share out anything that is on the Homeless coalition website, on your social media.

7. Agency Roundtable (All)

- We will be losing Jeannine on January 1st as co-chair, as she is retiring. We will need to replace her at the December meeting.
- Inga Cooper (Tillicum Lelum) is doing a fundraiser on Nov 29 from 12:00pm to 2:00pm. It is \$40 a ticket to go towards the Christmas hamper drive. There will be a speaker re: school district on what we've been working on if you would like to come and get more information.
- Yvonne Borrowes (Salvation Army)– December 7 is the Santa shuffle which is a run/walk to fund the meal program for the year. You can register on line. We are also doing Christmas hampers – and the person that was doing Secret Santa isn't doing it so I'm picking that up too!
- Taryn O'Flanagan (VIMHS) We broke ground on affordable housing site. It will be a 20month build with occupancy starting September 2020. It will be a mixed model and more on the affordable side - 20% shelter at \$375/month, another tier at \$475/month and it caps out at \$700/month. There are 23 bachelor units and it is on Rosehill right across from Midland Tools.
- Corrie Corfield (ICC) Our court case was found in favour of the Terminal project so we are very grateful and relieved and the plaintiffs will pay our legal fees!
- Jason Harrison (CMHA) – on behalf of BC nonprofit and vantage point, which does capacity building - starting to come out and do capacity building work in Nanaimo. Nov 19 there will be a Board Fundamentals and Strategic Recruitment session happening for Directors and Board members.
- Nadia Boukhouali (MSDPR)– Nadia will be taking over in Jeannine's position once Jeannine retires. Nadia provided some information regarding proposed act changes:

The proposed Act changes to implement the next round of *TogetherBC* policy changes were presented to the Legislature and are pending approval. These Act changes are targeted to be implemented with an effective date of January 1st, 2020. Details are outlined in the [News Release](#).

In Summary, the proposed *Act* changes include:

- Eliminate the 2-year independence rule
- No longer require clients to apply for early CPP
- Modernize the definition of spouse
- Adjusting the practice related to Section 10 of the regulations where clients are unable to provide documentation for eligibility
- Adjusting the approach to the amount of repayments
- Allowing new evidence to be submitted at the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal (EAAT)
- Theresa MacDonald (SEIA) – How do I respond to some clients that live in the Terminal modular living that have some concerns. They pay rent and have 2 checks a day for wellness and flammables. They say they frequently come home to their stuff having been thrown in the garbage. CORRIE (ICCS) It is a program agreement to have these checks and we are very careful, but cannot speak to specifics without knowing the details. They can check in with outreach or support staff at ICCS for Terminal for more information.

Next Meeting December 5th 10-12am SARC Rm, City of Nanaimo

