

Nanaimo Homeless Coalition

Let's Talk About
Homelessness in Nanaimo



Homeless Coalition Meeting Minutes – August 1, 2019

In attendance: Dave LaBerge (CoN), John McCormick (NRJHS), Lisa Bhopalsingh (CoN), Karin Kronstal(CoN), Signy Madden (UWCNVI), Terra Kaethler (UWCNVI), Alexis Peterson (Harewood Neighbourhood Assoc.), Grace Kerr (Service Canada), Violet Hayes (ICCS), Jason Harrison (CMHA Mid-island), Karly Fennell (Island Health), Kim Maandag (Salvation Army), Andrew Thornton (JHS), Andrew Ferguson (JHS), Nicole Benson (UWCNVI), Emily Sorensen (UWCNVI), Erin Hemmens(CoN), Heidi Hartman (BC Housing), Jake Rudolph(CoN), Chantale Roelens (NWRS), Theresa MacDonald (NWRS), Rana Van Tuyl (Celebrate Our Differences)

Regrets: Kim Smythe(Chamber of Commerce), Kix Citton(NBIS), Lois Peterson (FUFON), Jeannine Bousquet (MSDPR)

****NEW NAME for amalgamated agencies – Nanaimo Women’s Resource Centre and Nanaimo Citizen Advocacy Association is Society for Equity, Inclusion and Advocacy**

Meeting Chair: John McCormick and Signy Madden

1. Health and Housing Task Force update (City)
 - Background and update on Task Force – Lisa Bhopalsingh (CoN)
 - Key mandates: to support work of the Coalition; particularly in regards to allocating Reaching Home funding.
 - Task Force members consist of – Kim Smythe, John McCormick, Jason Harrison, Signy Madden, BC housing, City Council members Don Bonner, Erin Hemmens, Kate Good (First Nations), RCMP, Service Canada, Province of BC, Island Health
 - Task Force would like further information on ie: best practices from other communities, alternative options, etc– please contact Lisa/ Karin for ideas on this topic.
 - For more information on the Task Force, and for access to meeting documents please go to: www.nanaimo.ca ; Committees and Boards page. The City will also send links for Task Force meetings.
 - Jake Rudolph (CAO - CoN)– will help to facilitate the Task Force process – Jake has past experience with this type of work and is happy to share his knowledge and experience as this is the top issue in the Mayors inbox every day.
 - How the Task Force and Coalition/wider community will work together
 - TheTask Force is a designated City Council Task Force and Co-chaired by Council Members, whereas the Coalition is an open meeting and membership.

The Task Force will clarify who is doing what in the community and how work will be mapped out and distributed. The Task Force and Coalition will work closely together for the good of the community.

- The Task Force overlaps and connects with the CAT TEAM and Health Network as well. The Task Force works with local housing sites with input from RCMP
- Signy Madden (UWCNVI) – one of the strengths of the Coalition is we have direct service providers as well as funders present. The lived experience of working with clients is incredibly valuable.
- This is not a unique issue to our community but it is a big issue in our community and we are working diligently to move the dial on this issue. What we say about the City and Task Force has to all be on the same page with the Coalition - need to support each other.
- Heidi (BC Housing) - The Task Force shows community but also shows that not one agency can do this work on their own – but together we can use resources much more effectively.
- The Coalition is a great space for the community to share thoughts and opinions

2. Reaching Home Business (Signy, Terra, Grace)

- Reaching Home Community Plan 2018-2019 and Update on funding available for 2018-2019
 - Grace Kerr (Service Canada) – Community plans need to be submitted by October 2, 2019. It is an investment plan specifically for RH funding as to priorities and how funds will be allocated. The initial plan is for a 5 year duration but there will be opportunities to amend the plan along the way. It is based on Fiscal years.
 - Coordinated Access is a big part of Reaching Home (federal homelessness strategy). Funding is available for this and has been secured through the United Way. The requirement is to have a coordinated access system in place by March 2022.
 - Signy Madden (UWCNVI) We were requested to renew funding to the same Agencies again this year that we have been funding. If we are going to change how we allocate these funds, it will need to be done in the next few months. We need to decide as a wider community how the RH funds fit with what initiatives are underway in the community.
- Point in Time Counts
 - Discussion around conducting both a fall 2019 count and a spring 2020 count.
 - More updated data would be useful, especially for the Taskforce and City in setting priorities. Discussed other ways to go about getting it through BC Housing data and Island Health and other agencies with data.
 - The Coalition has about \$100,000 to invest between now and March 31, 2020. (Due to slippage funds from province funding the Unitarian shelter (approx. \$43,000) and with Coordinated Access funding.)
 - Andrew Thornton (JHS) – The Federal questions are prepared already. There was a BC housing harmonization workshop in late May which helped produce additional questions, but yet to be finalized. A fall count, if conducted, could be used to test BC housing questions for relevancy.
 - Andrew Thornton (JHS) – a PiT count provides estimates and high level trends – this methodology is used across the world to make decisions. The PiT count is more than data collection, it is a community building and awareness activity.

- Signy Madden (UWCNVI) If we go forward with a fall PiT count, a Motion will be needed at the September Coalition meeting to proceed. Over the last few years John Howard Society (JHS) has done the PiT count for us and we would recommend them again. If anyone else is interested please let me know.
 - Thank you to Andrew Thornton and those sitting on the subcommittee for their work on the PiTcount.
- Update on Aboriginal funding and future CE for 2020-21
 - UW is under agreement to deliver funding until the end of March 2020. Engagement sessions have not started as of yet but will likely start up again in the fall
 - Consultations will be carried out in 16 communities across the Western region. Designated CE to be determined. The process is ongoing.
3. Coordinated Access update (Jason, Signy, City)
- Signy Madden(UWCNVI) Funding has been secured. The requirement is to have a coordinated access system in place by March 2022.
 - Helpseeker
 - Jason Harrison(CMHA) - \$13,000 for initial piece of work for service and backend analysis of the platform, beginning with an asset mapping process, using existing data sets (bc211,Fetch, etc). Next steps would be data sharing agreements between agencies and platforms. There are 10-12 communities involved in this first phase of developing Helpseeker.
 - First data inventory available around October/November from HelpSeeker.
 - Signy Madden(UWCNVI) – BC Housing is driving the supportive housing piece and has their own coordinated access system. Looking at other opportunities as well. BC10 having discussions on how to harmonize BC Housing and Reaching Home Coordinated Access processes.
 - The CE needs some direction from the Coalition - we have funding and some could be allocated to Helpseeker to support this work. The Coalition will need to decide to contract to HelpSeeker at September meeting, as well as other support to help inform this process.
 - Options for possible coordinators of Coordinated Access process: Alina Turner, CEAH, Bob Yates/Keith Jones, SPARC
 - Lisa Bhopalsingh (CoN) - Asset mapping for key priorities would be beneficial, ie: substance disorders, homelessness etc. We would like to see a demo of how it works, inventory, capacity, can we track how many people are being turned away from a shelter, etc?
 - Jason Harrison (CMHA) Dr. Alina Turner (who created this system) is approaching this as a tool from the systems level but is not an entire solution and would need to be connected to other work that we have in place. This is the big picture and a starting point but will not give us everything.
 - Grace Kerr (Service Canada)– As an FYI - for communities not doing Coordinated Access – HIFIS will be a requirement
 - **MOTION to create a Coordinated Access Committee Jason moved Signy seconded MOTION PASSED**
 - Members: Jason Harrison, Violet Hayes, Andrew Thornton, Lisa Bhopalsingh, Signy Madden–Heidi suggests that perhaps Lois from BC Housing if you want to participate on this committee email Emily.

- **Coordinated Access committee to come back to the September Coalition meeting with options and suggestions for how to proceed on PiT counts, Helpseeker, and funding proposal.**
 - Lisa suggests that suggestions go to the TASK FORCE first at the next week meeting to see if they are open to the different suggestions we are putting in front of them.
4. Communications plan/agenda – quick up-date (Nicole)
- Nicole Benson(UWCNVI) We are moving forward with Coalition Comms plan: identity package; logo; webpage; good new stories.
 - Key messages and tone is really important– we’ve had some really great success sharing positive stories on social media. Please share through your organizations. We started to draft Comms pieces to be proactive as to what is coming down the line, so please share key messages with the coalition so we can stay up to date.
 - Comms work supported City funding
 - EMILY to send email to coalition members to get Comms contacts that would speak to coalition topics from the direct service side
 - Nicole Benson(UWCNVI) to get Andrew Thornton’s collection of videos on good news stories for the website
5. Reconfirm Coalition committees and membership (John, Terra)
- Look at terms of reference around coalition membership.
 - Committee lists
 - Community Plan Steering Committee is for Reaching Home work, Research and Data Committee is for the PiT count, Comms committee reviews calls for proposals
 - Remove Events Committee.
 - Could Comms committee for Coalition serve the Task Force as well? Coalition to vote on this at September meeting.
 - Co-chair shouldn’t be an agency that is receiving funding or a funder ie: John McCormick or Signy Madden. **Yvonne (Salvation Army) volunteered to co-Chair with Jeanine (MSDPR)**
 - The roll of the city will be clarified through the Task Force discussions.
 - The City will be requesting a Nanaimo Aboriginal Youth Council representative attend the meetings.
 - **Action: please update contacts with Emily (UW), including members, committees and comms contacts.**
6. “Housing Terminology” discussion - follow up from May meeting (City)
- Communications committee to discuss and bring back recommendations to Coalition
 - Heidi – BC Housing terminology around Nanaimo sites – purpose built, supportive housing, modular

Next Meeting **Thursday September 12, 2019 at 10:00am, SARC Boardroom, City of Nanaimo**