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**A G E N D A**

**Thursday September 9, 2021 5:30 pm**

***Meeting to be held in the Heritage Hall at the Cowichan Community Centre- Entrance beside the Arena***

**\*Due to the configuration of the room and group conversation we regret to inform you that there will be NO zoom option for this meeting.**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **1** | **Welcome and Introductions** | **10 min** |
| **2** | **Adoption of Agenda**  **Financial Statement**  **Correspondence** | **5 min** |
| **3** | * 1. **Rights of the Child- Article 24 You have the right to the best health possible and to medical care and to information that will help you to stay well** | **2 min** |
| **4** | 1. **Highlights of Successful Outcomes Over the Past Year** 2. **Our COVID Experience**  * What has worked? * What has not worked? * What do we want to keep and how do we move forward as a Network? | **95 minutes** |
| **5** | **New Business**  TBD |  |
|  | **Closing**  **Next meeting Possibly November 4. Date to be confirmed as Nov 11 is Remembrance Day -** Location to be determined |  |



**Network Minutes**

**Thursday September 9, 2021 Cowichan Community Centre Heritage Hall**

**Present:** Denise Williams Chair, Sheila Service, Cindy Lise, Sue Kurucz, Elizabeth Croft, Lisa Waterman, Debra Toporowski, Rosalyn Graham, Ina Kennedy, Carla Bortoletto, Val Masuda, Rhoda Taylor, Marybeth Small, Maeve Maguire, Linda Dirksen Gale, Gretchen Hartley Bev Suderman, Sonia Furstenau, Anita McLeod, Shelley Cook, Robin Routledge, Madelaine McLeod, Janet Simpson, Cailey Foster, Tracy Pocock, Barry Oriordan, Denise McKinlay

**Welcome New Members:** Shelley Cook, Janet Simpson and Lisa Waterman

**Presenters**: Denise Williams and Cindy Lise

**Update on OCCHN Activities**

* Working with COVID temporary Shelter Task Force for service delivery funding via UBCM to support and extend the temporary shelter sites as we transition from COVID shelter to supported housing.
* Working with community partners supporting youth to enhance service delivery model and align services to address priority needs
* Ongoing support of CAT, EPIC, primary care network and new CDH hospital project

**Call to order** at 5:30 by Denise who welcomed members and initiated round table introductions.

**The agenda was approved** by general consent.

**The Financial statement** was accepted as presented by general consent.

**Correspondence** – No correspondence

# What has been undertaken by Our Cowichan and Collaborative Efforts of Community Partners in last 12 months

* Launch of Pathways on line Resource Guide
* Launch of updated Our Cowichan Communities Health Profile
* Communications Systems Flourished Because of Pre-existing Relationships – Initiatives did not Skip a Beat. Examples include:
  + Task Leaders Meetings kept everyone informed
  + Cowichan Food Task Force Established
  + EPIC, Cowichan Community Action Team, Housing First for Youth Increased Communications and Zoom Meetings
  + Island Health Created COVID Emergency Response Planning Teams which were highly effective in cross department and community communications and planning
* Primary Care Network Launches
  + $6.5 million in annual funding to the primary care network once it is fully operational.
  + Over the next four years, residents of Cowichan will benefit from 36.2 full-time equivalent health providers who will provide better access to primary care. This includes family physicians, nurse practitioners and allied health professionals such as registered nurses, social workers and a clinical pharmacist.
  + Health Connect Registry is Launched to assist with finding a primary Care Provider. [Health Connect Registry, Cowichan | HealthLink BC](https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-connect-registry/cowichan)
* Collaborative Efforts Bring in Millions of Dollars in Grant Funding to Cowichan
  + Victoria Foundation
  + United Way
  + BC Housing
  + FNHA
  + Reaching Home-C Response
  + Canadian Red Cross- Covid Response
  + UBCM
  + And Many More
* PPE and Supplies Were Accessed and Supplied to Those who Needed Them
  + Hand Sanitizers from local spirits companies stepped up and filled the immediate need. Mask the Valley created thousands of masks when others could not be accessed
* The Valley was Fed
  + During the early days of the pandemic, access to Food was stopped and the valley stepped up. 450 food hampers were delivered to families with school children that were no longer getting hot lunches or food at school. Grants provided free Meals on Wheels to seniors who could not get out. Local First Nations were supported when they were in lock down and many meals were provided to those who are underserved. This was an impressive feat by no means!
* 8000 Students Transitioned to On Line Learning
  + 8000 students had to go from in school to in home learning. This meant that computers, internet and extensive supports from the school district and the community were required. Parents had life altering responsibilities to meet the learning needs of their children while juggling home and work.
* The Executive of Cowichan Island Health Worked Day and Night to Ensure all COVID Safety Measures Were Met. Staff Sacrificed in More Ways Than we can Imagine!
  + Every detail was discussed and planned throughout the health authority to ensure the safety of the patients and staff while operating in and outdated hospital and in the community. All leaders and staff worked hand in hand to determine what was required. This colossal effort cannot be understated. It is also great to report that there were NO COVID outbreaks in Cowichan District Hospital when we were a community ravaged by the pandemic.
* The Community Rallied to Inspire and Celebrate Front Line Workers
  + The Community rallied to support front line staff and to motivate them to keep up the valiant fight. Many sacrifices in personal and professional lives were unselfishly provided to keep our community safe. We need to continue to support and hold up front line staff in health and in community
* Homelessness was Decreased by over 76% and Dignity and Wrap Around Services Were Provided
  + What began with family sized tenting sites designed with dignity and wrap around care transitioned into safe and secure sleeping pods for the underserved people in our community. This innovative model has been incredibly successful and is being explored in other communities across the country.
* Peers Thrived
  + The shelter sites changed lives and continue to do so. Peers thrived, substance use decreased, some got jobs, some moved to permanent housing while others used the opportunity to get more training, promote harm reduction and to help in caring for our community by gathering sharps and keeping the area clean. Family style relationships blossomed and living a “normal” life while being fed, safe and cared for was something that many had not experienced in decades. Simple pleasures such as carving pumpkins or doing art were reborn. RCMP and Bylaw calls and interactions with the residents diminished.
* Cowichan Tribes Opens the First Extreme Weather Shelter for Youth
  + Cowichan Tribes took a leap of faith and stepped in to create the first cold weather youth shelter in our region. Opened from December 2020 to May 2021 the learnings from the initiative will now guide community youth leaders in enhancing youth services in the region.
* Cowichan To Receive 100 Supported Housing Units. Cowichan Tribes Begins 32 Unit Project
  + 100 supported housing units were announced during the pandemic. Many of the residents who are living in the shelter sites and hotel will be transitioned to more stable and permanent housing. (Anticipated in the Spring of 2022) Federal funding for Rapid Rehousing has enabled Cowichan Tribes to provide 32 supported housing units. Some units will support families whose children are at risk and will help to keep children and families together in a supported environment.
* Cowichan Hospice House Opens
  + In the midst of all of the pandemic chaos the beloved Cowichan Hospice House was completed on time and on budget and is now supporting the community with dignity at the end of a loved one’s life.
* Cowichan Health and Care Plan Continues to Develop
  + Island Health continued its work with the health and care plan designed to ensure that the health needs of community patients are met outside of being in the hospital. The Health and Care Plan targets high risk- high use patients to find better solutions to support and serve within the community within a virtual hospital setting.
* Historic Capital Projects Proceed Towards Development
  + Cowichan District Hospital
    - $887.4M hospital, with capacity for 204 beds
    - Construction begins 2022 for 2026 completion
  + Cowichan Senior Secondary
    - $80M 1100 Student Capacity
    - Construction begins 2021 with 2023 completion
  + Duncan/ Municipality of North Cowichan RCMP Detachment
    - $48M
    - Construction begins 2021 with 2022 completion
* Cowichan Gets 2.5 million Dollar UBCM Grant To assist with Enhancing Services
  + Increased Outreach Support
  + Additional Sleeping Cabins for Duncan and Lake Cowichan
  + Additional Support for Town of Ladysmith
  + Enhanced Food Security
  + Enhanced Security
* More to Celebrate!
  + Cowichan Green Community gets significant grant for the Food Hub
  + Habitat for Humanity builds two units in Duncan and 6 in Central Island
  + Cowichan Intercultural Society gets $30,000.00 for food funding
  + Volunteer Cowichan supports seniors with grocery shopping and friendly visitors while BC 211 enhances care for seniors
  + The Hamlets Residential Care Home opens with the assisted living units to open in the fall
  + Discovery Youth and Family Substance Use Services has received significant funding to enhance intensive services for youth.
  + Salvation Army Cares for underserved through the back door care packages and personal items
  + The Cowichan Intercultural Society supports newcomers with on line learning
  + The Hiiye’yu Lelum, House of Honorable Mothers opened in the spring of 2021 that will provide a safe home and environment to help 6 families stay together with newborns to enhance and support parenting skills and to eradicate child apprehensions. When the house was announced an anonymous donor provided $100,000.00 towards this very special program!
  + Although the horrific discovery of unmarked graves rocked the world with sadness and dismay, people rallied together with First Nations Communities. The atrocity has provided the chance to come to terms with what First Nations People have been saying for decades and to understand how we really got here. The march hosted by Penelakut had over 3000 community members standing together to share the message that Every Child Matters. We will continue to grow and learn in our journey to truth and reconciliation.

# What Worked in our Region?

* Friendships and a supportive community
* Staying connected via zoom
* Virtual care and telephone support to those who required health care, hospice care and mental health support
* Task forces and ongoing action groups to address needs in community
* Funding
* Community initiatives such as shelter villages and hotel with wrap around supports
* The right alignment of leadership in all sectors
* Governments moving quickly to respond to the emergency
* Communication, relationships and more communication
* Our Cowichan as the umbrella organization for which to disseminate information and make critical connections
* The ability to rise above the push back
* Great minutes to keep you informed when you could not be in a meeting (Sheila)
* A slower pace outside of work

# What Didn’t Work

* The impact of isolation especially on seniors
* Lack of internet connect for underserved or those struggling with poverty
* Social media misinformation and conspiracy theories (Reported by all tables)
* Avoidance of health care for not wanting to be seen virtually
* How pandemic impacted the most vulnerable more than others
* Too much zoom and the pressures of added workload for all
* Understanding rules that changed often
* Lack of funding and resources in community especially felt during the heat wave

# What do we Want to Let Go Of?

* Racism that stemmed from the recent events and pandemic against Asian and First Nations people
* Stigma against homeless and those who use substances or struggle with mental health
* Hate speech
* Misinformation, social media and conspiracies
* Silos
* Competition for needed funding and resources
* Anger around vaccines
* Handshakes
* Fast pace of previous life
* Cheezies, chocolate and wine ☺

# What do we Keep?

* Hope and compassion
* A balanced form of virtual care
* Funding for the initiatives underway that work!
* Our Cowichan, Cindy
* Some on line meetings
* Growing our network
* Broadening the scope of collaborations
* Working from home
* Respect of our health care workers and front-line staff
* Government moving quickly as a result of political will
* Community Collaboration and groups such as OCCHN that bring us together and facilitate sub groups
* Harm reduction, OPS and Naloxone training
* Task force structures and networking
* Housing First Villages with supports
* Working closely with First Nations
* BC 211 and social prescribing
* Connections to nature, outside, friends, colleagues, staying local, slow pace

**Next Meeting November 4 2021: 5:30 PM Via Zoom**



**Network Minutes**

**Thursday July 8, 2021 via zoom**

**Present:** Denise Williams Chair, Sheila Service, Cindy Lise, Sue Kurucz, Elizabeth Croft, Dave Gutscher, Linda Roseneck, Rosalie Sawrie, Lynne Smith, Lise Haddock, Carla Bortoletto, Kristine Sandhu, Marcia Hower, Linda Dirksen Gale, Carol Newington, Jane Hope, Robin Routledge, Chris Hall, Madelaine McLeod,

**Welcome New Members:** Leah Vance, Vanessa Bramhill

**Presenters**: Sophia Palmer Cowichan Valley Youth Services, Amy Bell Canadian Mental Health Association Cowichan Branch, Douglas Hardie Discovery Youth and Family Substance Use Services, Marcia Hower Ministry of Children and Family Development, Toni Williams Cowichan Tribes

**Update on OCCHN Activities**

* Meeting with Island Health and School District re: smoking and vaping initiatives. Drops in youth vaping were reported during the pandemic but concerns of increasing rates as youth return to unrestricted social contact are rising. McCreary data reports that increase due to increasing concerns in mental health and wellbeing are likely. SD 79 working with youth within school programming. Our Cowichan will work with the broader community in the fall to raise awareness.
* Working with COVID temporary shelter task force in applying for service delivery funding via UBCM to support and extend the temporary shelter sites as we transition from COVID shelter to supported housing.
* Working with community partners supporting youth to enhance service delivery model and align services to address priority needs
* Supporting the Town of Ladysmith and Cowichan Lake as they undergo poverty reduction strategy planning via Social Planning Cowichan
* EPIC information packages to seniors receiving vaccines
* Ongoing support of CAT, EPIC, primary care network and new CDH hospital project

**Call to order** at 5:30 by Denise who welcomed members and initiated round table introductions.

**The agenda was approved** by general consent.

**The Financial statement** was accepted as presented by general consent.

**Correspondence** – No correspondence

Youth @ Home (Housing First for Youth)- Cindy Lise

* Over the past number of years Our Cowichan has been stewarding the collective impact group previously called Housing First for Youth. Together with community partners the collective has met to network and learn more about the resources and services provided in the Cowichan Region. In light of the Opioid Crisis, Pandemic and recent loss of lives a small working group has come together to plan ways to better align and enhance the service delivery model in Cowichan. Data collected by youth service providers, the Point in Time Count and others indicate that the need to address youth health and wellbeing is never more evident than now. Efforts are underway to create a term of reference and identify key priorities as presented.

Current Priorities include:

* ***Integrated Youth Services Hub with Extended Hours and Safe Space***
* ***Youth With High-Risk Behaviours***
* ***Youth With Lower Risk Behaviours***
* ***Supported Housing for Youth Transitioning Out of Care***
* ***Rapid Response- (Emergency Shelter) When Required***

The health and wellbeing of youth in the region is not the sole responsibility of the community service providers but also falls upon all community members to create a welcoming, inclusive and supportive community that follows the lead of youth.

Cowichan Valley Youth Services- Sophia Palmer

Cowichan Valley Youth Services is a Not for Profit that has been running since 1973 offering trauma informed counselling to youth aged 13-18 and their families.

Youth in the region are powerful resilient and currently hurting. It is estimated that in the last year CVYS has supported over 700 youths and families. Their relational counselling program supports youth with the time they need and as such has not time limit. If a youth needs support CVYS is there. Isolation has had an impact on youth due to the rural nature of our communities. That has been increased exponentially with the pandemic. In addition, many youths are currently grieving the loss of many significant life experiences with family and friends such as graduations, going off to college and living independently. It is going to take time to recover and for life to settle.

* As we recover from the pandemic and begin to celebrate can we explore opportunities to celebrate youth?
  + Absolutely it would be wonderful to highlight youth in our celebrations. Members will consider ways in which to do so as we open back up.
* What can we do about youth vaping?
  + First, we need to determine what it is that youth may be protesting. Whether it is vaping, smoking, alcohol or substance use (amongst others). Our efforts to build relationships and safe intentional spaces for youth to be themselves and to be supported are the first steps.
* Sophia sent a document highlighting the services and programs at CVYS that will be distributed with the minutes.
* Thank you to all of the community partners for also making it through some very difficult times and in particular to the organizations that are coming together to support and honour youth. The opportunity to collaborate and work together is inspiring.

Canadian Mental Health Association- Amy Bell

**Bikeworks Artworks**

* Summer hours Mon-Fri 2-5:30
* New location 360 Festubert st.
* Created around Circle of Courage
* Focus on connection and engagement
* Youth aged 12-19
* Access to GP Thurs 1-5
* Activities offered
* Bike mechanics, art supplies, video games, cooking, music

**Open Door**

* New location 360 Festubert St
* Summer hours Mon-Fri 9-1
* Safe space for youth 12-24
* Access to GP Thurs 9-12
* Access to laundry, food, phone, computer and comfy couches
* Connect to staff who can liaise with other youth teams for wraparound care
* First point of contact/minimal barrier

**Youth Outreach**

* Summer program- 1:1 connection to fill gaps
* Ability to be flexible to meet youth where they are at
* Currently focusing on linking youth with resources
* Getting ID, bank accounts, housing applications, PWD applications

**Family Capacity Program**

* Collaborative approach with counsellor and family outreach worker
* MCFD referral only- 16-week program
* Focusing on parenting support for youth with mental health needs
* Working with families to build life and parenting skills
* Available Mon-Thurs flexible hours

**SAIP Sexual Abuse Intervention Program**

* Sexual Abuse Intervention Program
* Youth up to 19 who have experienced sexual abuse
* Youth up to 12 who are displaying sexually intrusive behaviours
* Personalized counselling with youth that may include family and parents
* Individualized support
* Play and art therapy integrated into counselling

**Rainbows Support Program**

* Group to nurture grieving children
* Socializing for youth who are experiencing loss
* Safe space to understand grief and loss
* Age groups set on needs of youth
* Running once a week 2x a year- Sept and Jan start dates
* Waitlist taken year round

**Bounce Back**

* CMHA provincial program
* Online or through telephone
* Serving youth with mild to moderate depression
* Adapted video, workbooks and telephone counselling for individualized support
* Learning skills to manage stress, worry and low-level anxiety

**Affordable Counselling**

* Individual counselling for all ages
* 63$ a session with Masters Level counsellor
* Low barrier
* Zoom, in person and outside meetings

**Malahat Girls Group**

* Facilitated Girls Group for ages 9-13
* 2 Youth Workers and an Elder from Malahat Nation with food provided by Malahat cook
* Structured groups that focus on learning life skills and resiliency
* Communication, Critical Thinking, Confidence, Culture and Connection
* Summer program focused on fun activities and connection

**Notable Gaps**

* Safe consistent spaces for youth to hangout
* Youth turning 19 with no ID, bank accounts, SIN etc.
* Communication between teams to support youth
* Social isolation and loneliness

Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) -Marcia Hower

* The Ministry supports children and families from birth to age 19. Services range from:
  + Early years prevention and working with families to meet their needs
  + Children requiring supported needs
  + Child and Youth Mental Health 1-1 and groups
  + The care system including foster care, extended family care, child welfare and child protection
* The opioid crisis hit our region with a “bang” and youth who were both in care or not in care were on the street and putting themselves at harm. In 2020 the crisis was more evident as two youth died as a result of overdosing on the toxic drug supply. Immediate response was required but there were no funding supports in place. Immediately the staff redeployed as outreach staff (many who worked during the day and then stepped up for overtime at night). They began reaching out to youth each night connecting, handing out food and providing support. This was extremely emotional work and the dedication and energy required from the staff was exemplary and worthy of acknowledgement. In response MCFD started a pilot project with funding support from Island Health. In collaboration with MCFD and Island Health, the youth outreach project continued to provide outreach, harm reduction, connections and supporting relationships with the youth.
  + The chat included gratitude and thanks to the front-line social workers and outreach workers for their efforts

Discovery Youth and Family Substance Use Services-Douglas Hardie

* Douglas thanked Our Cowichan and Facilitator Cindy Lise for the efforts to bring youth service providers together in the last 6 months to align efforts and unite to address the needs of youth in the region.
* Discovery Youth and Family Substance Use Services offers free community-based counselling services, access to residential care and treatment for youth struggling with substance use. We assist youth and/or their families to reduce the harms associated with substance use and related issues.
* Discovery’s services are available to anyone in the community directly or indirectly impacted by substance use.

This includes:

* Youth aged 13 to 19 who have concerns about alcohol or drug use
* Families/Caregivers who are concerned about a youth using alcohol or drugs
* Any support person who is worried about a youth’s use of alcohol or drugs
* Youth who are affected by someone else’s use of alcohol or drugs
* Building on the introduction of this work from Marcia – Douglas provided further information on the outreach team and the challenges that they faced in the past year as they met youths out on the street and found ways to come along beside them by building caring and supportive connections, providing harm reduction, snacks and access to places to go. There were some very challenging times in the dead of winter when working with vulnerable youth. It was equally important to take care of the team staff and extra supports were provided.
* In addition to working with MCFD, Discovery began to work closely with Cowichan Tribes and Toni at the youth shelter as well as CMHA and others. Outreach and emergency response were required by MCFD and on occasion RCMP safety checks.
* Significant efforts to engage and work with families has been important. Determining “who is important to the youth is very helpful and most families are grateful for the support from Discovery and care very deeply for the wellbeing of their children
* Douglas shared data to highlight the needs and the resources provided. The numbers speak volumes of calls and what outreach staff are doing.
* A significant grant has just received been received that will enhance the outreach program by adding nursing, addictions medicine and child and youth psychiatry

Cowichan Tribes- Toni Williams

* Toni is the manager for the youth programs within Cowichan Tribes and over the winter months stepped into the role as the manager of the barrier free Youth Shelter that opened in December 2020 and provided services to May 31, 2021.
* There were 28 unique youths that were supported with the shelter and 189 points of contact.
* The average age of youths accessing the service were 16.5 years old but there were some as young as 12 or 13 who arrived on site.
* Not all youths were using substances and some were fleeing violence or challenges within the home. Some were experimenting with drugs and alcohol.
* Significant challenges had to be overcome by some very brave staff in efforts to provide this kind of care while ensuring COVID safety measures.
* It was quickly learned that youth don’t access shelter in the same way that adults do. They are seeking a safe space. This includes a place to access food, clothing, a shower, to charge their phone and for a nap. Not all youths needed to stay for the night.
* It is also very important to note that the discussion or prevision of harm reduction for youth is hard to come to terms with for many. It is perceived that harm reduction is promoting substance use but in fact is every measure to keep youth safe and alive.
* What is needed is a barrier free safe space for youth where they can have their needs met and connect with skilled and caring adults.
* The winter cold weather shelter will be opening again this fall. More information will come in the fall.
* Current focus is on getting kids reconnected to each other and to just have fun this summer. Cowichan Tribes is working to open summer camps!

Cowichan Family Life -has just received funding for child and family counselling. This is not for severe cases that require trauma informed specialists but is a program built via peer related counselling. Further opportunities to enhance young adult mentorship/peer counselling programing is under development.

**Next Meeting September 9 2021: 5:30 PM IN PERSON** (based on Provincial Health Orders and is subject to change) Location to be determined