

**Minutes of the Victoria Family Court and Youth Justice Committee Meeting held
Thursday November 23, 2023, CRD, 625 Fisgard Street in 6th Floor Boardroom**

PRESENT:

Municipal Representatives: Marie-Térèse Little (Metchosin); Mena Westhaver (Saanich); (EP) Jeff Bateman (Sooke) Kimberley Guiry (Langford); Marcie McLean (Highlands); Esther Paterson (Oak Bay); Sara Duncan (Sidney) (EP); Rose Stanton (Highlands-Alternate); (EP); Constable Varley (EP).

Capital Regional District (CRD) Representative: Bill McElroy (EP).

School District Representatives: Teri Vanwell, (School District 63 Trustee)

Guests: Cindy Andrew (Director, Community Partnerships, The Village Initiative); Jule Anne Hunter (Executive Director, Youth Empowerment Society).

Resource Members:

CRD Staff: Steve Carey (Senior Manager, Legal & Risk); Sharon Orr (Senior Committee Clerk, Legislative Services); Donna Kroker, (EP); Marnie Essery (Secretary) (EP).

Regrets: Krista Loughton (Victoria); Karin Kwan (School District 61 Trustee); Adam Flint (View Royal); Cynthia Day (Colwood); Trudy Spiller, (Trustee SD 62); Cendra Beaton (Alternate Trustee SD 62); Jack McLintock (North Saanich); Corey Wood (Central Saanich); Jim Rondeau (Alternate Central Saanich).

EP - Electronic Participation

The meeting was called to order at 11:30 am.

1. Territorial Acknowledgement

The Chair welcomed everyone to the unceded traditional territories of the Coast Salish peoples, on whose traditional territories we are blessed to live, work and play.

2. Welcome and Introductions

2.1 All committee members and resource agency representatives also introduced themselves.

3. Resource Agencies (updates from any guests in attendance, 30 mins max for this item, including questions from committee)

None in attendance today.

4. To Approve the November 23 Agenda

Recommendation: That the agenda for November 23, 2023 meeting of the Victoria Family Court and Youth Justice Committee be approved.

MOTION: E. Paterson/ T. Vanwell

CARRIED

5. Adoption of Minutes

5.1 That the minutes of October 26, 2023 Victoria Family Court and Youth Justice Committee meeting be adopted.

M. McLean queried whether J. McClintock was in attendance for the Oct 26th meeting. M. Essery will follow up on this.

**MOTION: J. Bateman/ E. Paterson
CARRIED**

5.2 Receipt of the Steering Committee meeting notes of November 10, 2023 That the notes of the November 10, 2023 meeting of the Victoria Family Court and Youth Justice Steering Committee be received.

**MOTION: J. Bateman/ K. Guiry
CARRIED**

6. Chairperson Remarks-Great to see so many people in person today.

7. Presentations/Delegations

Cindy Andrew
Director, Community Partnerships
C: 250-686-9209
action@thevillageinitiative.ca
www.thevillageinitiative.ca

Cindy Andrew, Coordinator of The Village Initiative, an inter-disciplinary network of more than 50 organizations sharing a commitment to the vision of healthy and thriving children, youth, and families across the Sooke and West Shore communities. Presenting TVI's new Trent's Trajectory infographic, its work to bring a Foundry BC youth counselling centre to the West Shore, and TVI priorities of interest to VFCYJC members.

She shared her PowerPoint presentation with the committee. She will email this PowerPoint to our Secretary who will email it to VFCYJC Members after the meeting today.

Discussion

- She is willing and eager to collaborate and help kids and families.
- They are planning a community forum for possibly late February 2024 to release info about the 2023 BC Adolescent Health Survey.
- J. Bateman thanked C. Andrew for all of her work. How can this committee advocate and educate? Cindy emphasized that there is a role to play at multiple levels.
- Youth voices are often lost in the community. They don't feel connected to their community. There is a complex array of factors that contribute to this including change in economy, family nurturance, school connectedness, global pandemic etc.
- There is no shortage of work that needs to be done.

- A 'shout out' to Pacific Centre Family Services Association. Liz Nelson, Executive Director, is involved in the Village Initiative.

Julie Anne Hunter, Executive Director, Victoria Youth Empowerment Society
533 Yates St, Victoria BC
250-383-3514
www.vyes.ca
<https://www.instagram.com/vicyouthempowermentsociety/>

Julie-Anne Hunter, Executive Director, Victoria Youth Empowerment Society, reported on the YES Summer Employment Opportunities Program, funded through a 2023 VFCYJC grant.

From the YES report... "Over nine weeks, our Summer Opportunities Worker provided over 30 unique opportunities for youth to participate in healthy recreational activities. These activities allowed them to develop life skills while also ensuring they were connected to services throughout the summer. 143 youths attended SOP programming over nine weeks. On average, 35 meals were provided to youth per week, which consisted of lunch and snacks in between. SOP saw many youth utilizing meal services within the drop-in space and with this in mind, SOP staff utilized food-related activities to meet these basic needs, while creating an opportunity to make connections. SOP staff offered approximately 48 referrals to support youth with community resources over the summer.

The most common were the following:

The Kiwanis Emergency Youth Shelter, Sanctuary, and the Foundry Youth Clinic.

Activities this year included art projects such as tie-dye, going to local Victoria establishments like the Bug Zoo and the museum, and fun treats such as ice cream. SOP tried to balance activities and needs, so on days when activities did not go as planned, the SOP youth worker was flexible with the youth to adapt to their interests and needs on a daily basis. This flexibility looked like adjusting the activity to suit their interests, as well as adjusting activity time frames. For example, many youth enjoyed the art activities, and so our SOP worker would leave out the projects day to day and youth often chose to keep working on those rather than going on an outing.

This year, we saw the impact of the cost of living crisis on many youth, with them gravitating towards food activities and having more in-depth conversations about the costs of things such as rent and groceries.

Whenever possible, referrals were made to support the youth who attended over the summer to ensure they were getting their needs met.

We also saw the Summer Opportunities program get used consistently by youth who needed social connection but did not want to participate in the 'hang-out' scene

downtown. It seemed to make a difference that every day those youth knew the SOP worker would be there to offer opportunities for them that were different than just getting their basic needs met.

As an example, there was one youth who came almost every day to the summer programming. They lived on their own and often felt isolated to the point of expressing suicidal ideation which led them to use unhealthy coping mechanisms. They said that SOP gave them something to look forward to each day and through the support they received from the SOP youth worker, they built confidence enough to make relationships with other supports and had a job at the end of the summer. This story demonstrates the importance and need for summer programming for youth who may not have access to activities or healthy peer groups.

Thank you again to the Victoria Youth Family Court Youth Justice Committee for the grant that allowed us to run Summer Opportunities Program this year. We would not have been able to provide quality summer programming to youth without your generous grant. SOP allows us to ensure that youth do not destabilize over the summer, providing much needed prevention programming for youth in the downtown core.”

Discussion

- When you are dealing with youth at risk you need a wide variety of services. Y.E.S. provides healthy social and recreational activities free of charge. There is a need for youth to access these things that often, families can no longer afford. They gain the youth's trust and facilitate change.
- The Youth Empowerment Society annually helps over 1000 youth, from age 13 to 22.
- Y.E.S. is willing to give a tour to VFCYJC Members.

8. Subcommittees

8.1 Priorities and Grants (Marcie McLean)

M. McLean noted that the Umbrella Society Application had unfortunately not been provided to VFCYJC Members along with other agenda materials for this meeting due to an oversight.

To: Victoria Family Court & Youth Justice Committee (VFC&YJC)

From: Priorities Sub-committee, Chair Marcie McLean

Subject: Grant application received from Umbrella Society for Addictions and Mental Health (the applicant) received by the Priorities Sub-committee on October 12, 2023 via Steven Carey CRD staff.

The applicant has provided all the necessary documents and information for the Sub-committee to review and process their application. The application is for a one time funding contribution of \$5,423.32 towards the applicant's costs for an 18 week, once a week 2 hours (evenings) for an Intensive Journaling Workshop including a certified trained facilitator, materials, bus passes, and snacks.

The purpose of the Intensive Journaling Workshop (the Workshop) is to support their participants in reaching their individual goals around their substance use. The Workshop is offered free of charge to participants and the Program is offered to anyone within Greater Victoria who wants to work on their recovery from mental health and addictions/substance use challenges. The applicant is offering \$6,700.00 towards in-kind contributions for the

Workshop which leaves their total request for a grant of \$5,423.32. Although the Program appears to have merit, there were members of the Sub-committee that felt it did not appear to have at this time sufficient youth involvement in participants. This is based on the applicant's information provided and additional questions to them on the potential 15 participants.

A goal of VFC&YJC is to serve youth and families in the Capital Regional District. **Therefore, the Priorities Sub-committee recommends that: The Victoria Family Court and Youth Justice Committee not support the grant request from the Umbrella Society for Addictions and Mental Health submitted in 2023 for their Intensive Journaling Workshop program.**

Respectfully submitted, Marcie McLean, Chair, VFC&YJC Priorities Sub-committee

Therefore, the Priorities Sub-committee recommends that the Victoria Family Court and Youth Justice Committee not support the grant request from the Umbrella Society for Addictions and Mental Health submitted in 2023 for their Intensive Journaling Workshop program.

MOTION: M. McLean/ E. Paterson

Opposed by B. McElroy

CARRIED

8.2 Capital Region Action Team for Sexually Exploited Youth (Bill McElroy)-No Report

8.3 Family and Youth Matters (Cynthia Day)-No Report.

8.4 Court Watch (Marie-Terese Little)-No Report

8.5 Communications (Jeff Bateman)

VFCYJC has an open invitation to all Resource Agencies to come and share at the beginning of our meeting agenda. A reminder was emailed prior to this meeting, and will be a regular practice going forward.

J. Bateman has drafted a letter to invite Jennifer Charlesworth, B.C. Representative for Children and Youth, to be our guest speaker at the VFCYJC A.G.M. on January 25, 2024.

He is happy to report that our Twitter account is back in business. Thank you to A. Flint and M. Essery for their help with this.

VFCYJC will email a letter to municipalities re the matrix and the CRD will issue a press release for 5 CRD Appointments to VFCYJC.

9. Treasurer's Report (Esther Paterson)

9.1 VFYJC 2024 Budget

Thank you to B. McElroy for the historical data and R. Stanton for preparing it.

For the VFCYJC to approve the 2024 budget as presented

MOTION: E. Paterson/ M. McLean

CARRIED

9.2 CRD 2024 Budget

To approve the 5-year budget as presented

MOTION: E. Paterson/ K. Guiry

Thank you to E. Paterson, R. Stanton and M. Medland for their work.

CARRIED

10. New Business

10.1 M.Y.S.T. Advocacy Update (Marie-Terese Little, Jeff Bateman)

The M.Y.S.T. Advocacy updated November 10th letter has been sent to all contacts.

Thank you to J. Bateman for his well-written letter.

Gord Magee has shared a M.Y.S.T. report.

The link to the Fifth Estate feature on Gord and Mia was also shared again with VFCYJC Members.

10.2. Qualification Matrix Update (Marie-Terese Little) -The Chair encouraged VFCYJC Members to share their experience and background by emailing this information to vfamcourt@gmail.com.

10.3. Annual Report 2023 (Adam and Sub-Committee Chairs)

10.4. Location and Dates of Upcoming Meetings - Jan. 25, 2024 (AGM and Monthly Meeting), Hybrid Meeting, Zoom or in person at the CRD 6th Floor Boardroom, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Feb. 22, 2024-location to be determined, No meetings in March,

April 25, May 23, June 27, Sept. 26, Oct. 24, Nov. 28, 2024, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the CRD Boardroom and via Zoom unless otherwise notified.

11. Notice of Motions-none

12. Correspondence-none

13. Roundtable-no time for this today.

14. To Adjourn at 1:00 pm

MOTION: J. Bateman/ K. Guiry

CARRIED