



WEST KOOTENAYS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2008

CHAIR SUMMARY

This section will highlight the Council's accomplishments from the past year as well as describe the direction for the coming year.

- The council sponsored a number of events over the past year, which were intended to raise the awareness of the community council, the role of CLBC in the community, and to support self-advocates to learn the skills and have the supports to be included in their communities. The highlight was the 'inclusion' contest where we had positive response by the community and self-advocates, and requests from a number of communities to expand the contest this coming year.
- The council also held a public forum and met with a number of stakeholders and community members and received support and helpful feedback to assist us in planning over the next year.
- Recruitment has become a major issue with the council, as further community representation is required as well as a decision to add additional self-advocates to the committee. This will be the focus of the council over the next few months to ensure the membership is representative of the region and is sustainable.
- Once the recruitment phase is complete the council will develop its goals for the coming year which will be based on the council membership, and feedback that has been received to date.
- The council will continue to focus on discussion and ideas that will continue to address current systemic challenges.

KEY INITIATIVES

BUILDING WELCOMING COMMUNITIES

To make communities more inclusive and accessible, the West Kootenay Community Council will explore new approaches to service delivery and share information with their communities. The goal of the council is to continue to raise awareness about systemic disability related issues, and engage the community in the development of more inclusive communities. The council completed the following initiatives that supported the building welcoming communities initiative by:

- The council participated and sponsored several community living initiatives across the Kootenay boundary region, within several communities. Members attended local events in their home communities.
- The council co-sponsored with the local CLC "celebrating the heart of the community" events

in the communities of Trail and Grand Forks. The events showcased the new CLBC video “Freedom to Belong” and gave communities an opportunity to engage and provide feedback to CLBC and the community council.

- The council sponsored an “inclusion” contest and invited self-advocates from around the region to submit a piece of art or a writing sample which depicted or described ‘what inclusion means to you’. T-shirts were printed with the winning submission and have been used in various events around the region to promote inclusion for self-advocates.
- The council supported a number of self-advocates and council members to attend a self-advocate conference in Cranbrook and the fall KRACL conference in Castlegar.
- The council co-sponsored an open house for the newly renovated Castlegar CLC. This event introduced the new “self-advocate” room and celebrated the CLBC and council partnerships with self-advocates, families, service providers and communities.
- The council supported the development of a self-advocate committee for the West Kootenay, and will provide ongoing leadership to the committee and its membership.
- The council with the local CLBC manager and media relations consultant met with local community officials of Castlegar, Nelson and Trail to discuss opportunities for partnership, review of local OCP’s and to raise awareness of CLBC and the role of the council.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

- The West Community Council faces ongoing recruitment challenges, which are compounded by the geographical challenges and the attempt to ensure the entire region is represented on the council.
- The challenge to maintain a focus on awareness and moving the “change” agenda forward, and realizing that change takes time and commitment. By focusing on local change opportunities one person and community at a time, the council can remain focused and passionate about the issues.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Community councils will enhance accountability of CLBC for results that achieve its mission and vision by:

- The council chair’s (West and East) participated in the CPD Kootenay regional strategic planning event and provided input and direction to the strategic plan. This event also assisted the chairs’ in learning more about facilitator and analyst roles in their communities.
- The CPD manager provided overall CLBC updates and status updates as per the workplan at each council meeting.
- The council completed an annual self-evaluation form, as well as a manager evaluation form.
- Council members updated the members at each meeting as to their community involvement and any initiatives, ‘good news’ stories or community challenges at each council meeting. This generated discussion and idea-generating opportunities.
- The council developed an annual strategic plan.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

- The council explored ways to overcome and attempt to 'link' outlying communities to their council and CLBC team. It was acknowledged that additional flexibility and innovation in how the council works within its communities needs to be explored in the coming year.
- It was acknowledged that more work needs to be done in the coming year to build on a sustainable community council in the Kootenay boundary area.

FINANCIAL DECISION MAKING

The community council will have input into the allocation of financial resources within the existing budget limitations:

- The West community council met with the QSM twice during the budget cycle (beginning of fiscal year and mid-year) to receive updates on budget allocation. This opportunity was also used to inform and provide input and feedback to community pressures, and suggested priorities.
- Council completed an annualized (revised mid year) budget to support the work identified in the annual strategic plan.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

- It was identified by the council membership that the opportunity to provide meaningful input into the budget allocation and priority setting process was limited. They felt that decisions were already made and that there was very limited opportunity to really expand or grow the resources in the region.
- Although budget and resource allocation is important, most council members felt that given their limited time and capacity and understanding that they would find it challenging to assist more with the budget process. They see their role as more involvement in making community connection and awareness of disability related issues.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- Castlegar city council
- Nelson city council
- Trail city council
- West Kootenay MLA
- Kootenay / Boundary MLA

- Various service providers and staff

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

NAME	COMMUNITY	MEMBERSHIP
Nick Toner	Nelson	Self-Advocate
Sandrelle Fraser	Castlegar	Self-Advocate
Sandi McCreight	Castlegar	Community member - Chair
Madeleine Harlamovs	Fuitvale	Family member
Helen Lorimer	Castlegar	Family member
Janet Royko	Fauquier	Family member
Nancy Gurr	Trail	Service Provider