

Sparwood Senior's Drop-In Centre
101 4 Ave, Sparwood, BC V0B 2G0

November 26th, 2024
9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Mandy Daniels, Tom Kramer, Nany-Jo Oneil, Shelly Wedderburn, Rosa Maria Rocca, Tim Schoahs, Anita Palmer, Nich Godri, Evgeni Matveev, Kerri Wall, Katey Taylor, Alexis Martig

9:00 Opening Remarks – Anita Palmer, Steering Committee Chair

- General welcome and housekeeping (emergency exits/restrooms) -Anita Palmer
- Land Acknowledgement- Anita Palmer
- Safety share –
Rosa: in the winter months, make sure you check your home's vents for snow. Accumulated snow can impact carbon monoxide venting and could cause serious harm or mechanical failure if failed.

9:20 COIAI House Keeping

- 2025 Matrix & Steering Committee Position -

Reviewed matrix

Position	Steering Committee Member
Steering Committee Chair	Anita Palmer
Local Government	Amy Cardozo
ENGOS	Evgeni Matveev
Michel Creek Rd/GN Rd	Shelley Wedderburn
Youth	Vacant
Seniors	Rosa Maria Rocca
Business/Housing	Katey Taylor
Education	Tim Schoahs
Healthcare	Kerri Wall/ Nancy-Jo O'Neill
Social Services	Kim Bauer
Community Safety	Len Gostick
Recreational users	Tom Kramer
Indigenous	Terry Anonson/Alexis Martig
EVR Communities	Nich Godri
EVR Human Resources	Creighton Glober
2SLGBTQ+	Vacant
Families	Vacant
Arts & Culture	Vacant

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- 2025 COIAI Chair

Anita Palmer will maintain position as COIAI Steering Committee Chair

- 2025 Dates

Anita: December and July used to be when we hosted the partners meetings.

Shelley: December partners meeting is nice because its festive.

Rosa: June would be nice to avoid summer holidays.

Nich: Continue booking steering committees quarterly along a similar time frame as 2024.

- Partners Meeting Presentation Ideas

- Summary- The June meeting is intended to be hosted at St. Eugene and presentation will be along the theme of Land use.

Evgeni is interested in presenting at one of the Partners meetings: options are land uses in the elk valley, or data analysis.

Nich to touch base with Evgeni on presentation a couple months before June Meeting.

Nancy-Jo: perhaps avalanche Canada for December.

Anita: Randall Mcnair mentioned being interested in presenting on the wildlife overpass.

Alexis: Land use from the Ktunaxa perspective could be a potential topic for the

Anita: potential for an offsite at St. Eugene

- EVCNPVoice.com Website updates

Nich is working on updating the website, please send updates that you would like to on the website and on your Bio.

- COIAI Values

Nich to send out our current values statement ahead of the next steering committee meeting for review. At the 2025 Q1 meeting, we will discuss our values and mission.

Rosa would like Jared Basil's contact. Nich to send Jared's contact information

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10:00 Steering Committee Updates

- **Amy Cordozo- Absent**
- **Anita Palmer**

Anita: Update for RDEK A, particularly Hosmer. There is a proposal for a new fire hall in Hosmer. Mark (former RDEK representative) put away 4 million dollars for RDEK development before he retired. He proposed buying land on Dicken however, the project was put on hold. The current facility has been evaluated for structural integrity. Anita went to a public meeting a couple weeks ago at the Hosmer Hall. **Anita to share the options for Nich to distribute.**

1. Option was to tare down the old fire hall and the community hall. However, this facility was built by volunteers and isn't an option.
2. There is a little piece of MOTI property that could possibly be transferred to RDEK.

Tom: Noted similarities on the process/challenges with the fire hall in Fernie.

- **Evgeni Matveev**

Evgeni: from the ERA perspective. Great fall for ERA restoration work, with 4500 livestakes collected and 2000 having been planted north of Sparwood.

IJC opened the investigation into the Elk Valley watershed. IJC appointed ERA founder and former board member Stella Swanson to the study board. Their plan is to conduct a full investigation of the pollution in the Elk River/Watershed. Kelly McKendrick, also on the Elk River collaborative monitoring.

Nancy-Jo: Was the river warmer this summer than years previous?

Evgeni: Not according to ERA data. We saw consistent precipitation through the summer which help alleviate drought conditions and water temperature spikes.

Tom: Is the data on water quality public?

Nich: yes, on the water quality hub.

Evgeni: mentioned the Kootenay Boundary Water tool.

Nancy-jo: Do you anticipate change in mandate for the IJC following the recent US election results?

Evgeni: Nothing at this time indicating an impact on IJC process.

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Evgeni: if anyone is looking for some extra cash, 2-5 hours for a week every month collecting and sorting bottles.

- **Shelley Wedderburn**

Shelley: our cross walk is pedestrian controlled. There is a suprising amount of folk walking at night. So, anyone traveling that road, be cautious of pedestrians at night.

Heavy truck traffic on MCR. New contractors traveling the RD. Shelley to send Nich pictures.

New families on MCR, could EVR find out if the families have a good of winter home safety.

Mandy: that would be me, they are South African folks who have limited experience with the snow.

Shelley: New truck traffic might be confused with google maps. Shelley will be attending a town hall meeting on November 26th to discuss closing MCR to heavy duty traffic.

- **Rosa Maria Rocca**

Coleman seniors are having trouble with community investment. It was the blinds.

Nich: will touch base with tammy on community investment for the Coleman seniors.

Rosa: there are programs where you can buy gifts for seniors for this Christmas. It is called Christmas angels. Check in at the Red Apple in Fernie to participate in the program.

We need volunteers for December 1st at rocky mountain village to decorate the doors for Christmas. In the pass, they are called Christmas angels.

- **Katey Taylor**

Katey: from the EVFS, we have a number of projects on the go. We will be breaking ground this spring on the childcare project. That will be 27 housing units and 100 spaces for childcare. 16 of the units will be designed to Early Childhood Educators (ECEs). Timbers phase-2 has 32 units breaking ground in the spring. The Fernie firehall housing project is planning 44 units, there is commercial space available at street level and we are still looking for commercial tenants. Of the 44 units 11 or 12 will be affordable housing, and the rest will be lower end rates. We got approved to work on the Elkford housing project. We are looking at building 65 units across two different buildings with commercial space on the street level in the Elkford downtown core.

Nancy jo: when is the housing unit in Elkford breaking ground?

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Katey: we are still in early stages of planning, so shooting for the fall of 2025 but realistically but more likely the spring of 2026.

Rosa: seeing a lot of updates on the Timbers building, what is that about?

Katey: there was an unfortunate incident at Timbers Landing by where some sprinkling systems froze in the dead of winter. So hopefully we will be back to full occupancy in short order.

- **Tim Schoahs**

Tim: Speaking of the Fernie Childcare project and ECEs. The plan is to pitch to ECE students early in their ECE training at the College of the Rockies that the plan is to open the Fire hall housing process. The hope is that when students complete the program, they can walk straight into a job and housing.

Nancy-Jo: how many folks are going through the ECE program per cohort.

Tim: about 20 per cohort.

Tim: the Mast program ran into some challenges this year in the wake of the international student allotment imposed by the province. Each educational institution receives a certain number of international allotments, however, the biggest draw back was that publication of the news of this new allotment system disincentivized international student application.

This year, we filled the water monitoring program, funding was available for the future skills grant. The Pilot went well. Class time was split 50/50 in-person/virtual. The first week was online but then we realized that the first week is best to class spirit and build in person connection. In the future we might run the program in person for the first week and then alternate in person classes to campuses outside of Fernie: ex: golden.

We are resocializing the adult upgrading program and upgrading courses. These programs are at the core of what the college supports, so good to get the word back out in community to support folks in their continuous educational pursuits.

- **Kerri Wall**

Kerri: I work with Interior Health on policy and environments that promote good health. This primarily takes place on the local/municipal level. I've been working with Mayor Milligan and Wendy on the Fernie housing issue.

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The draft RDEK climate plan is looking for feedback on the draft plan. The public comment period closes on December 2nd. Nich to send out the link to the RDEK climate action plan following the meeting.

Touching on the living wages, and the provincial campaign: Two years ago, the Fernie's living wage was 23.58/hr. And the province put out the new provincial assessment. Kerri is looking for a volunteer to help calculate with the living wage in the elk valley. Despite high median incomes, there exist great disparities which impact overall community health. Get in contact with Kerri if you are interested.

Nancy-jo: the 2024 provincial report was just published, what was the calculated living wage?

Kerri: 22.90 an hour in the Columbia basin.

- **Nancy-Jo O'Neill**

Sparwood Xray machine is up and running. Primary care in Sparwood is in a good place with doctors. Waitlists are going down. There used to be a was a small ED at the Sparwood clinic, it moved to a larger room during covid, they are thinking about moving Emergency Department back into the small space. Will fill you in in Q1 as to what happens. We are at a place in Sparwood to maybe start consulting with community input.

We also have a new initiative called the Elk Valley maternity clinic. They have put together a traveling maternity clinic that helps provide maternity care and counselling for rural residents.

In Elkford, the government did approve the UPCC and we are planning a soft launch in may 2025 depending on funding. The UPCC provides urgent primary walk-in care to support the ongoing transient work population. There was a new build for Interior health, with a vision for a healthcare hub including a one stop shop for healthcare. There are talks about moving the UPCC into the healthcare hub down the line. The engagement process for the UPCC is quite involved. An emphasis has been placed on Indigenous perspectives in healthcare. Elkford has been busy with new families, and we are losing primary physicians. We are actively recruiting physicians. However, it is important for candidates to have a good understanding of the rural landscape in the Elk Valley. Elkford will be the first effort at a remote rural UPCC model.

Sherry has been working hard on on the palliative care program.

Shelley: In regard to the sparwood emergency department, do the change in the emergency department mean less beds?

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Nancy-Jo: it doesn't appear that that would be the case. However, Nancy-Jo will give the COIAI an update in Q1 of 2025.

Mandy: did you hear about the new families moving into the Elk Valley?

Nancy-Jo: It would be good for you (Mandy) and I to have a conversation regarding new families and healthcare support for them.

- **Kim Bauer -Absent**
- **Len Gostick -Absent**
- **Tom Kramer**

Tom: no secret that access has competing interest. It seems like over the years, the recreational groups have been working in silos. The province has interest in reducing trail density. Tom is working on the Fernie trails master plan working to balance competing user group interests. Last year we met with the provincial minister on land use, and it is evident that the Elk Valley receives a lot of pressure from various users. One of the huge benefits of working on the master plan is aligning different user groups which in term mitigates conflicts.

Thanks EVR for the lumber donation for trail building efforts. Meeting with TC on the pipeline right-of-way. We were hoping that access would return to regular post construction. However, the DFO identified creek crossings that have impacts on species of concern. The meeting with TC was positive. They would like to build crossings over some of the creek crossings to support access and minimize impacts on species of concern.

Tom will be attending the EVR outdoor recreation meeting on December 4th .

Tom is also the designate for the Kootenays/Rockies fly fishing association. They are working on a fly-fishing plan to evaluate and mitigate fishing and other water use pressures on fish species. Trying to gather information on fish mortality, competing recreational use, water temperature, and selenium levels.

Working on connecting Coleman with canal flats trail system. Recent staff changes have pushed back public input. Still working with MOTI for access on the Bull River area.

Tom is working on the youth ORV ATV safety courses.

Evgeni: Where were you putting in the bridges?

Tom: along the TC energy right away. Streams include Leach, Martin, some other small feeder creeks of the flathead river.

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Evgeni: is Chad a part of that committee?

Tom: not sure

Evgeni: Also, would be very interest in hearing about the outcomes of that fish health research.

Evgeni: Columbia basin water hub-posted is another good resource for water related data.

- **Alexis Martig – No update**
- **Creighton Globber/ Mandy Daniels**

Mandy: Vacancy: 220, 125 staff, 92 hourly. Few remaining Coops.

We are estimating that we will finish up the year with an additional 1000-1200. 1000 would be permanent. Greenhills is set to grow in workforce. Most other mines are relatively stationary. What we are seeing a lot less interest in folk relocating to the Valley.

We have another batch of heavy duty mechanics coming in short order. Including families would be roughly 80-90 people. 7 or 8 families won't arrive until the new year.

Nancy-Jo: my understanding is that they have 3 months to meet red seal.

Mandy: we actually give them 4 attempts to pass the red seal test.

Nancy-Jo: From a healthcare perspective, when they arrive are they on medical insurance. Lots as folks don't realize they need to apply for BC healthcare status. Without the card, they can't get on a waitlist for a physician.

Mandy: My understanding was that was at 3 months of being in BC they could apply for their BC healthcare number.

Shelley: regarding motor vehicles licenses, I'm wondering if that needs to be better communicated.

*Discussion around challenges with licensing and transportation.

- **Nich Godri**

Nich: Community events

- Sparwood Fall Fair- October 18th: sponsored the BBQ for the Sparwood Skating club.
- Elk Valley Pride Festival- EVR participated by hosting a book.

Nich: Community Investment

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- Community Investment Process-Still developing our process. For the time being, email Tammy Ogden with requests for community investment
- Frank J. Mitchell Elementary School- EVR donated \$29,000 to support the upgrade of the playground at Frank J. Mitchell Elementary School in Sparwood, enhancing safety and accessibility issues at the aging playground.
- Sparwood Food Bank- \$100,000 to the Sparwood Food bank to help secure a new permanent location @ 114 centennial square.

Nich: Water treatment treatment update

Across the Elk Valley, our four active water treatment facilities are successfully improving water quality. This year we've seen significant progress in our water treatment efforts, including some big milestones in the month of September. Compared to the same month last year, our water treatment program achieved: Total increase in water treated of ~31%, Removal of ~32% more nitrate, Removal of ~24% more selenium

At the same time, we're advancing six additional water treatment facilities that are expected to almost double our water treatment capacity by 2027 to 150 million litres per day.

Nich: Other Updates

- Mine Reclamation award: At this year's British Columbia Technical and Research Committee on Reclamation (TRCR) Symposium, EVR was presented the 2024 Mine Reclamation Award in the Coal Mine category. Congratulations to the Reclamation and Line Creek West Operations teams (WLC), who were acknowledged for their innovative, landscape-scale approach to reclamation. Special thanks to DJ Formanski and Jaqueline Dube for their work on the project and award application, and Clayton Dubyk for his leadership on the program.
- CPKC Hydrogen Locomotive: EVR is partnering with Canadian Pacific Kansas City Limited (CPKC) on a pilot program to integrate the use of CPKC's hydrogen locomotives into EVR's steelmaking coal supply chain. The hydrogen locomotives are anticipated to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and are safe and quiet, containing less rotating equipment than diesel electric locomotives and don't generate CO2 emissions. The pilot began this October and will continue throughout 2025.

Nich: Upcoming engagements

- Water quality open house – November 26
- Outdoor recreationalist meeting—December 4th



EVR ELK VALLEY COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST ADVISORY INITIATIVE

Q4 Steering Committee MEETING

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Nich: EVR Feedback update:

- Dust- largely seems to be calming with the precipitation, however, prior to the snow fall, we did have a couple of concerns
- Parking - We have received a complaint from the mall that contractors are using the mall parking lot to stage vehicles. I'll be meeting with the mall owner next week to discuss solutions.

We have made progress on parking in the Crowsnest pass. Discussions with potential land owners have been initiated to help find a permanent parking location for shift workers in Blairmore.

- Access - In the fall, we saw a significant increase in access related questions. This is normal ask hunters familiarize themselves with our updated NUE boundaries
- Blasting- Over the last year, we set up temporary monitors in Sparwood to test against our existing monitoring locations accuracy. The results of those findings will be presented tomorrow at the Q4 SCEEAC meeting at the district hall.

Meeting adjourned at 11:55