



**EVR ELK VALLEY COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST ADVISORY INITIATIVE**  
**Q2 STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

Sparwood Senior Drop-In Centre  
101 4 Ave, Sparwood, BC V0B 2G1

May 26, 2026  
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 pm

**Meeting Minutes**

**Attendees:**

Anita Palmer	COIAI Chair RDEK area A
Shelley Wedderburn	Michel Creek Road
Rosa Rocca	Seniors
Brandy Moriarity	Social Responsibility EVR
Sashun Erickson	Social Responsibility EVR
Sharon Strom	Elkford Housing/Business/Seniors
Anne Caroline Kruger	ENGO's - Elk River Alliance
Chrissy Hill	Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy
Michelle Krenbrink	Elkford Arts & Culture Representative

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**1:05 Opening Remarks – Anita Palmer (RDEK Area A and Chair COIAI)**

- General welcome and housekeeping (emergency exits/restrooms)
- Land Acknowledgement

**1:10 Safety Share – Brandy Moriarity (EVR)**

- Bears are out again, have an awareness of wildlife and drive accordingly.

**1:20 COIAI House Keeping - Anita Palmer (RDEK Area A and Chair COIAI)**

Reviewed action items from Q1 2026 Steering Meeting

**Action Items**

Actions: Reach out to the Youth Members and Sparwood Secondary to see if there is any Youth interest in joining the COIAI (Brandy Moriarity will follow up again in August)

Action: Reach out to Terry Anonson and Jean Sultzer about BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) role in COIAI (Michelle to reach out to confirm whether he would like to decline)

Action: Also looking into an Indigenous role (Tim Schoahs)

Action: Update the membership matrix (Brandy Moriarity)

- Updates on Steering Committee Composition/Photo and Write up of Members for COIAI Website, website will be updated prior to next meeting (Brandy to add Michelle)

Action: Brandy to send Feedback mechanism and Community Investment portal information to the Committee

Action: Brandy have Feedback Mechanism posted to the next available Fernie Fix ads

Action: Brandy send Michelle Krenbrink the COIAI information package

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### **Community Updates and Member Roundtable**

#### Rosa Rocca – Sparwood Seniors

- While reading meeting minutes noticed that Seniors are losing some of their funding (Brandy to send out community investment information, see actions)
- BCER Event about writing wills, no ads or marketing.
- Rosa will touch base with Sharon on some collaboration work

#### Shelley Wedderburn – Michel Creek Road Residents

- May 7<sup>th</sup> Dusting event over Lagoon D
  - Brandy shared about Feedback line and SCEEAC
  - Brandy recommended Shelley attend the BRE Open House event May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2026, to discuss dust with Subject Matter Experts from EVR
- Dirty Vehicles
  - Increase in dirty vehicles in community
  - Sashun talked about the policy that is in the works with stricter rules
- May 19<sup>th</sup> bylaw proposal to regulate heavy vehicles in the District of Sparwood, but didn't reach quorum at the time, will be at a future council meeting

#### Michelle Krenbrink – Arts and Culture

- Very strong grassroots art scene in the Elk Valley, but isolated to the individual towns; would like to see collaborative approach
- Arts culture for mental health; having more supports and spaces for mental health
- Volunteer run organizations are hard to move toward a common goal
- Limited arts dedicated spaces
- Geographic isolation for bringing in instructors etc., to Elkford
- Beginner friendly arts programming
- Intergenerational and family-based arts programs; e.g., graffiti program teaching kids and finding a common interest
- Cost and accessibility
- Suggestions
  - Accessible website and space and art supplies
  - Micro grants
  - Shared resources and equipment support
  - Regional promotion
- Brandy to share Community Investment information

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Sharon Strom – Senior Housing Elkford

- Building capacity; two vacancies
  - 55+ or with a physical disability
  - 5 subsidized, market rent, rent geared to income (\$500-\$1200/m)
- Finishing landscaping and other projects (thank you EVR)
- CRN (Community Response Network), Coal miner days parade entry for World Elder Abuse Awareness Day
- Pride society partnership
- De-cluttering workshop (potential presentation for a future Partners Meeting)

Anne Caroline Kruger – Elk River Alliance

- George Greene is stepping down as chair of the ERA
  - Recruiting board members
- AGM coming up
- Thank EVR for sponsorship
- Looking for other opportunities to sustainably operate; staffing, fundraising etc.
- Reminder of kids camps 7–11-year-olds, outdoor based camp availability this summer, go to Elk River Alliance website

Chrissy Hill – Fernie Pride Society and CBAL

- As VP of Fernie Pride, wanted to let us know they are looking for a Treasurer
- Wrapping up CBAL program year (follows the school year SD5)
  - Some programs are a bit shorter than other years
- Chrysalis house; readiness skills workshop
- Isabella Dicken; Kindergarten readiness program
- Rachel Podrasky contacted about a group of new international workers
  - finding supports and resources for them
- Looking for Impact stories
- Reducing barriers and getting people what they need
- Connecting with Michelle Krenbrink with some interesting Arts and Culture based ideas around collaboration with CBAL
- Connecting with Sharon/Rosa on impact stories from Senior and Intergenerational Impacts
- Literacy goals for 2027
  - Promote and offer dignity to learners
  - Diversify funding streams
  - Reduce barriers to learning

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- Food with Friends in Fernie; Salvation army food share; like a soup kitchen where they can ask questions etc.
  - Possibility of introducing to other communities

Anita Palmer – RDEK A

- **ADDED NOTES Hartley Creek Bridge Replacement**

The Ministry of Transportation and Transit has shared a project update on the Hartley Creek Bridge Replacement and has asked us to share it with you on their behalf. Though this project is not affiliated with the RDEK and we have no jurisdiction over roads, we are sharing on the Ministry's behalf as we know it impacts residents.

The overview includes:

  - an updated construction schedule with tendering now anticipated for Summer 2026, detour preparation works planned for Fall 2026, and main bridge construction targeted to begin in Spring 2027
  - An overview of safety and detour considerations
  - A high-level overview of how they intend to share communication about the project moving forward
  - A new project email for all questions and concerns: [H3.Hartley@gov.bc.ca](mailto:H3.Hartley@gov.bc.ca)
- FireSmart is coming to the Partners Meeting in June – they are in full force right now as we are getting into fire season
- Check the RDEK website for: short term rentals, recycling, Hosmer fire hall, project planning Official Community Plans (OCPs)
- Fernie Feast for a Cause in collab with EKFH fundraised for critical cardiac care: LUCAS machine (maybe 2) and ECG for Fernie Hospital
- Camping “squatters” in the Elk Valley
  - East Kootenay Task Force has taken this issue on
  - EVR also has a dedicated team dealing with this issue on EVR lands

EVR HR Update

- Q1 - Hired total 239, 170 haul and labor, 29 trades, 40 staff
- Vacancy: 150 haul labor, 23 heavy duty mech, 17 other trade, 108 staff, 75 roles

Brandy – EVR

- Complaints and grievances feedback report
- Feedback on the Feedback Mechanism Surveyed the Group
  - Initially yes, the process worked well, but lately no. Find it is a way EVR talks the talk, but they are not walking the walk
  - EVR will get back with some data and information, but problems aren't being fixed

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- Community members aren't reaching out anymore
- Fernie Fix ads ideas
  - Feedback Mechanism

### **Other Business**

- No new or emerging concerns
- Sparwood Recycler: Give 100 recyclers to a district and track usage – contact the districts to see about the program and if there is an opportunity to get involved.
- Promotion of COIAI
  - New building, other venues etc. might bring more draw
  - Partners, really like the presentations and lunches
- Baldy Ridge Extension Open House tomorrow 6:30pm

### **3:00 Closing Remarks and Next Steps**

Next meeting June 24, 2026, COIAI Partners at the new EVR Office