

Meeting Minutes

Introduction

- 1.1 Welcome – Anita**
Provided a land acknowledgement and started the meeting. This was the first hybrid meeting of the group, so some members were in person and others on zoom.
- 1.2 Safety Share – Volunteer**
It's been quite icy lately and a Sparwood local had a bad fall recently. Remember to shuffle on the ice where needed. If you are looking to buy new shoes, this website offers ratings on their grip. <https://kite-uhn.com/rmt/en>
- 1.3 Welcome new committee member – Tom Kramer**
Everyone introduced themselves.

Review of Agenda

- 2.1 Review of agenda – Anita**
No changes.

Representatives Update

- 3.2 Education – Anita**
The college has been very busy. They are running the HCAP program training health care assistants who are already hired by local employers. They have an intake in April and September so if you know of anyone who is interested, please send them to the college. It is a seven-month program.
(Q) is it transferable.
(A) No.
They also have a program for female entrepreneurs calls HERizons (see advertisement below).
- 3.3 Employment – Creighton**
There has been a lot of hiring this year, over 1000 and will likely be near 1300 by end of year. There are 500 vacancies. About a 50/50 split between office workers and field roles, and then of the field roles about a 50/50 split between trades and haul truck/laborers.
(Q) What are the demographics of these new hires?
(A) traditionally it was people aged 21-40 but now it is wide open and we are seeing people from a wider age range.
(Q) Are people looking for accommodation with employment?
(A) As of today we don't have plans for that although some jobs come with relocation and the Elk Valley Lodge has been used for temporary accommodations. Elk Valley Lodge is only a temporary solution and oriented toward contractors. Teck is still involved with the District of Elkford Housing Committee.
- 3.4 Environment – Chad**
Cottonwood project is ongoing. There was recently a Grizzly strike in the area. It was noted that Environmental Damages Fund (\$60 Million from Teck fines) is going to become available. The first round of funding is for riparian and trout habitat. It is administered by ECCC, KNC, and the federal government. Let Chad know if you have ideas for projects relation to riparian area. Teck hosted their annual Water Quality Open House on Nov 23.

(C) – After last year's rain event there was a sediment settlement near Koochanusa. It also seems like there has been a lot of forestry activities. We looked at a layover from the last 50 years and a lot has happened in the last 5.

(C) Yes, it has been catastrophic. Wildsight has some good info on clear-cutting. On sedimentation, it is caused by many things. The flooding event last year activated a lot of sediment and it didn't clear up as early in the year. Vegetation is one of the best things to do on the banks.

(Q) What about the concern that cottonwoods damage bank protection?

(A) There are some techniques that can be used right from the beginning of construction of bank protection where the vegetation actually supports the engineered bank protection.

3.5 Housing – Simon

Many new members of our municipal governments ran on housing. There is a focus on it locally, provincially, and nationally. David Eby talked about taking new steps to free up housing and reduce barriers. There is unprecedented funding right now so it is a good time if there are groups wanting to start projects. The Elkford Housing Society is moving forward but had unprecedented contributions from Teck that would not have happened in a community without a "Teck". One challenge is that the process is slow and with rising costs it is difficult to manage the process.

(C) Are volunteers and non-profits the right people to be doing this work?

(C) Perhaps not volunteers but non-profits with paid staff seem like the right way.

3.6 Interior Health – Kerri

Housing is a big concern. The provincial living wage for Fernie was released and it is \$23.58/hour. The living wage is calculated based on a 2-parent family with a very modest budget. Many people are not making that. Cranbrook's is \$21.90. There has recently been a crunch at the hospital, people are coming in with no place to sleep. More and more they are discharging people who have nowhere to go. There is a lot of concern in the Elk Valley and Interior Health is wanting to get more involved. The city of Fernie is looking to get a committee of council. There are people sleeping in cars and storage units.

(C) It is a long-term issue but also a short term issue with the huge influx during ski season. Many are sleeping in vehicles.

(C) There is also the power dynamic of having some bigger operations in the area who are paying higher wages.

(C) It would be nice to have Fernie Alpine Resort included in the conversation about housing.

(C) Because housing is such a big issue affecting so many in the community – it has been suggested that the next partner's meeting have multiple speakers speak to housing. Some ideas for speakers at next partners meeting:

- Canadian home builders' association to speak to housing continuum
- CHBA BC could be a point of contact to recommend speakers
- Maybe someone who has seen success like Medicine Hat
- Would like to hear about real lived experience of people struggling
- Would like to invite FAR, Municipal government Reps, and Interior Health leadership.

3.7 Ktunaxa Nation – Rachelle

Housing is also an issue facing Ktunaxa Citizens. We are seeing tents behind Walmart. We have some supports for example Operation Street Angel and the housing society. What it comes down to is having the funding and a land base.

(Q) Is there someone at KNC dedicated to housing?

(A) That falls into the social sector and housing board which are an arms-length from KNC.

(C) Noted that Terry and the Elk Valley Metis are also interested in housing.

3.10 Michel Creek and GN Road residents – Shelley

The biking and walking trail being developed on Michel Creek Road was on its way to being completed but Fortis asked for an additional survey and so there have been some construction delays. They are hoping for an early spring 2023 completion. It is unfortunate because there is a lot of traffic on the road.

Traffic concerns on Industrial Road #2 and Michel Creek Road due to plant repairs at EVO: Residents were notified in September about increased traffic in the area and asked to contact Teck with any concerns. There were several issues, traffic backing up, idling, and littering. One challenge is that they need to get permits to go on site. Tensions started to raise for contractors and residents – it seemed like they were in a rush and driving erratically. The strobe lights would shine in their bedroom windows and at times it felt like a freeway. On Monday the road on site opened and traffic is to be rerouted. While there will still be concrete trucks, the light vehicles were mainly the problem so that shouldn't be an issue and Elkview has put up signs.

(C) For Teck there were a lot of learnings that came out of that and those will be considered if there is ever a situation like this in the future. We appreciate the ongoing communication and feedback from area residents as it helps us continue to improve.

3.11 Outdoor Recreation – Tom

From an outdoor recreation perspective, they are mainly focused on three things - access, conservation, and public safety. While motorized recreation has had some negative media attention, we are trying to reshape the perception of what we do as a club. We are very interested in working with other recreational users (ex. Bike clubs and equestrian) and want to educate users on trail etiquette so that trails can be shared safely. The Elkford ATV club is looking forward to collaborating and is looking for some training on writing grant applications.

(C) Chad has some experience and might be able to help support that and ERA is looking for some support getting access to back country water monitoring locations.

3.12 Seniors – Rosa

There are a lot of upcoming events leading to the holidays for seniors in the local communities:

- Snow Angels are looking for volunteers to brush snow off of senior's cars and shovel between them. The contact is Michelle at Lilac Terrace.
- Rocky Mountain Village Door Decorating on Dec 1 at 5:30 – to volunteer contact Saran.
- Fernie Rotary Christmas Lunch for Senior's is Dec 14 11:30am and 1:00pm.
- There are two senior's lunches for Christmas in Sparwood at the drop-in Centre.
- Craft and Bake Sales – December 9 @ Sparwood Mall, Elkford's is December 13.

One concern among senior's is the lack of benches in Sparwood. Noted that The Sparwood Community Network had five installed and Shelley will connect with Rosa on that.

3.14 Teck – Mariah

See notes below in new business.

Old Business

4.2 Discussion about Health Care Task Force

The meeting ran out of time and this section was not covered. This can be added to the next agenda.

New Business

5.1 Presenters for Q1 Partner's meeting

See discussion above.

5.2 Teck feedback received – Mariah

In September most feedback was requests for house cleaning (24). Others included an access question (1), feedback about a dirty vehicle (1), general inquiry about leased land (1), feedback about traffic on Michel Creek Road (1), feedback about blasting (1), feedback about the berm at Elk Valley Lodge (1), and feedback about housing in the Elk Valley (1). In October, most feedback was about dirty vehicles in the community (6). Teck has a clean vehicle policy and expects that contractors and employees will clean their vehicles before entering communities. Others included feedback about traffic/vehicles (5), feedback about dust (4), questions about non-mining lands (2), feedback about blasting (1), a request for house cleaning (1), feedback about hunting land (1), a water delivery inquiry (1), a question about the plant fix at EVO (1), and information about a fake Teck Facebook page (1). Feedback for November is not complete, but some concerns raised this month include:

- Traffic concerns on Michel Creek Road which are being managed directly by the Teck employee responsible for non-mining lands.
- One specific concern was about traffic leaving one of the trailer parks on Teck's gravel road, creating dust and driving over the new walking path. Teck put up boulders to stop traffic from using this area.

5.3 Teck announcements and projects – Mariah

An invite was shared to two upcoming engagements.



Teck's Annual Outdoor Recreationalists Meeting

Please join us for dinner and presentations to discuss a variety of environmental matters of interest to the community including Teck's Nature Positive initiative, road rehabilitation progress, wildlife, private land management, as well as closure planning and reclamation.

Date: December 7 from 6:00 – 8:30 PM
Location: Sparwood Senior's Drop-In Centre

Please RSVP at:





5.4 Fernie Fix Ads

The meeting ran out of time and this section was not covered.

Closing

The next meeting will be on February 15, 2023.

Action Items

Description	Responsible	Status
Past Action Items		
Cottonwood Project - If you know anyone with riverside property who would like an assessment and potential help with that reach out to Chad.	Everyone	Ongoing
Communicate feedback to Teck about housing and land availability in the valley and provide a response to Terry on it.	Mariah	In Progress
Update website with new pictures of committee members.	Mariah + everyone	Ongoing
Put Health Care Task Force on the agenda for the next meeting.	Mariah	Complete – to be done again.
New Action Items		
January Fernie Fix		
February Fernie Fix		
Mariah and Simon to connect on housing speakers for Q1 Partner's meeting.	Mariah + Simon	

Appendix A: Information about HERizons program from College of the Rockies.

Welcome to HERizons



The HERizons program is featured on the inside back cover of the Fall 2022 Continuing Education Guide. We would like to provide you with some additional information in the event you receive calls or inquiries about the program.

HERizons is an externally funded women's skills development program and is made possible through a partnership with Seneca College. The program's aim is to empower women in the workforce to cultivate sought-after job skills and develop entrepreneurial mindsets.

All components of the program are **free-of-charge**, and are developed from an inclusive, women-focused perspective. These components include:

- **Virtual workshops**
 - A range of topics offered such as resume writing, financial planning, self-advocacy, and entrepreneurship fundamentals etc.
- **Networking events**
 - The first nation-wide hybrid event "HELIX RISE Summit 2022" will be held on November 17, 2022, from 11:00-16:00 MST. Participants will be able to attend online, or in-person at the Cranbrook Campus. The topic of HELIX RISE is financial wellbeing and brand building for both her business and her personal life.
- **Educational Supports**

- Business Math and English fundamental skill enhancement courses (not for credit)* will be offered in the Fall for eligible participants
- **Mentorship opportunities, learning simulations and more**

For individuals with questions or those wanting to participate, please contact HERizons@senecacollege.ca or the COTR local program supervisor Brittney Herrington at bherrington@cotr.bc.ca.

**N.B. Business Math and English skills will fall under the umbrella of the UACE program as non-credit skills courses, offered in consultation with Seneca College.*

Seneca HELIX
HERizons

