

Minutes of Meeting		
Location: Zoom	Date: November 25, 2021	Time: 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Purpose: Q3/Q4 Steering Committee Meeting	Version:	
Attendees: See attached	Issue Date:	

The meeting started at 1:05

Introduction

1.1 Welcome – Anita

Anita welcomed everyone and mentioned the goals for the meeting including deciding on executive members and planning speakers for the partners meeting on December 15, 2021. After welcoming every she opened the floor for a safety share.

1.2 Safety Share – Volunteer

Sharon offered a health focused safety share that many people at this time of year get low on vitamin D and one option is to take a supplement for that. It is worth looking into to understand the positive benefits of taking it. Shelley added that Vitamin D is very important. Sharon agreed and noted that it is true especially in our area where there are short summers and a lot of clouds.

Review of Agenda

2.1 Review of agenda – Anita

There were no additions to the agenda.

Updates

3.1 Community safety– Scott

Scott shared that at this time of year the roads are dangerous. They were called out yesterday to a car in the river, thankfully the occupant got out. They were cold and shivering but generally not hurt. Everyone should watch for poor conditions on the roads and make sure they have the correct tires. Another safety consideration at this time of year are Chimneys. With more people having wood fires remember to get your chimney cleaned. In terms of floodwaters there are many dangers that the public may not realize. Often, for example, there is sewage that gets into it and that is why search and rescue use special suits to go into floodwaters. Another danger with floodwaters is that you often can't see the bottom which means you can easily run into obstacles or dangers. One example is that manhole covers may get moved with the flow of water and so a person can easily fall into one. Scott gave one example from Fernie recently where someone called 911 because there were floodwaters on their property and even though it may have only been waist deep, it was the right choice to call in and get help because of all those dangers.

Questions, comments, and answers:

Sharon (Q) – Is there a fatality number for the flooding?

Scott (A) – Unsure at this time.

Anita (C) – There were five fatalities from the one mudslide.

Scott (C) – Often the public want to help, especially those with boats but they don't always realize what they are getting themselves into.

Anita (Q) – Were you involved with the rescue on Cokato?

Scott (A) – Yes, they would have had to walk through more than waist deep water so good that they waited and called for help. It was the right thing to do. We went with a fire truck but quickly realized that the fire department couldn't manage that.

Sharon (C) – Thanks for all that you do. We appreciate that very much

Scott (C) – Many people don't have check lines on sewers, which could prevent them from backing up.

Anita (C) – Thanks for everything you do

3.2 Education – Anita

Anita gave an update on what is happening at the college (COTR). Unfortunately they have had 2 sewer backups in a week. The Fernie campus has been extremely busy. First Aids are very busy and full. They have 18 students in the MAST program. Sarah Osberg is the new instructor. She is doing a great job but it is hard losing a staff member who has been there for 26 years because a lot of knowledge is lost. The college trained 12 HCA (health care assistant) students. They have a new program where future HCAs are hired by Goldenlife and then trained on the job and go to the college as well. They soon should have their theory done and labs done and so will go into practicum in January. The college is not scheduled to have a program next year but they are very needed. Upgrading is very busy for people to go on to other programs. Both this and main campus are busy with that. It has been a welcome site to have students back. They have managed to do so safely by requiring everyone to always wear masks in buildings.

Questions, comments, and answers:

Sharon (Q) – Are students required to be double vaccinated?

Anita (A) – No because it wasn't mandated but the ski hill needs it for the pass and so in the MAST program they have had to accommodate that.

Sharon (C) – And they have come from afar.

Anita (C) – One from Italy, Germany, 4 international students.

3.3 Employment – Creighton

Teck is actively trying to recruit a lot of people, there are about 250 vacancies in the valley. Any new employees of Teck need to be fully vaccinated. If boosters are recommended in the future, it will include that. Some people have been ineligible, but it doesn't seem to be a big hurdle. The bigger piece is finding enough people who want to work.

Questions, comments, and answers:

Chad (Q) – What is reason for lack of personal? Housing?

Creighton (A) – Housing plays into it but it is a combination of factors. Even for some of the roles that offer full relocation it is hard to find candidates. Some people may not want to be back in the workforce. Cost of living also plays into it.

Sharon (Q) – Are the openings mostly for hall truck drivers?

Creighton (A) – That's a portion but there are others as well. Every site is looking for entry level hall truck drivers.

Anita (C) – 4 are graduating tomorrow from the simulator training. It is hard to understand the lack of people wanting to work in high paying jobs, as compared to lower paying industries like hospitality.

Anita (Q) – Where have all the workers gone?

Shelley (C) – What we are hearing is that people don't want to come unless they can bring their families and lack of housing is huge. I'm hearing that from a couple of sites. They have friends who would be happy to come and relocate and housing is just not available to them.

Anita (C) – That's huge

Chad (C) – I've noticed the number of people who aren't single (have animals, spouse, or family) who are looking for homes has skyrocketed, whereas before it was more single people. The norm now is people who are couples or families looking for housing. That's the new normal.

Sharon (C) – Childcare used to be a big issue but fortunately Elkford went from having no licensed childcare to what will soon be three, which will take some pressure off the Sparwood facility.

Creighton (C) – Childcare is still an issue but not the prevailing one anymore. Housing is huge and has become a bigger issue.

Anita (C) – For the college it's an issue of when students will no longer be able to come here because of housing. In Fernie when a house goes up for sale a lot are being purchased by out of towners as a vacation property.

Chad (c) – Or Airbnb.

Anita (C) – In a meeting with a realtor recently they mentioned that five houses were sold that were rentals and were bought by families so are no longer in the rental pool.

3.4 Environment – Chad

The biggest ongoing project is the Elk Valley Water Quality Monitoring Program. The inaugural meeting is scheduled for December 3. The program will include a lot of data collection and provide a single space to store it. The program is not just about Teck, but about cumulative effects in the valley. They also have a Cottonwood restoration project that is in the early stages. Cottonwoods provide protection against erosion and act as a buffer for floods. The program will be focusing on getting riparian vegetation planted to help prevent erosion and act as buffer for floods which also helps aquatic habitat. Private land management and access will play a role in that, so they are hoping to get some conservation access to restore those riparian areas. 80 people participated in the shoreline cleanup. The aim for next year is 150 people and spreading it up into Elkford and Sparwood. It would be helpful for Teck to distribute that internally when the time comes. The focus will be on climate change and climatic adaptations over the next few years. One example is the sedimentation project in coal creek and looking at hydrometric studies, for example later rains instead of snows.

Questions, comments, and answers:

Sharon (Q) – Any education programs?

Chad (A) – Yes though they are sporadic and opportunistic at this point. They hired a communications and education coordinator who will be looking to develop education programming. They have been speaking to a lot of grade 9 and 10 students about environmental projects.

Anita (C) – The college and Elk River Alliance also held summer camps.

Chad (C) – At the camps they had a knowledge holder from Tobacco Plains come up. They were happy to see that integration with the wider community and would like to expand the number of camps next year so will collaborate with Anita on that.

3.5 Housing – Simon was absent.

Anita (C) – The Chamber of Commerce is striking a committee to do some work on housing needs. Anything that comes from that will be years away, and it can be difficult to get things built in Fernie. There is a new housing project by Isabella Dicken Elementary School and hopefully next year sometime people will be living in there.

Sharon (C) – Elkford Housing Society is very close to building 25 units, building should start next year.

Scott (C) – One background issue with building in Fernie is permitting, but another that has been discussed lately is that the sewer system would need to be re-engineered to accommodate more housing.

Chad(C) – One of engineers at the city mentioned that roof water is flooding the sewer system.

3.6 Interior Health – Kerri and Leala were absent.

3.7 Ktunaxa Nation – Johanne was absent.

Sharon (C) – Johanne is new to us, we are looking forward to meeting her at the partners meeting and are happy to have her!

3.8 Local Government – Jason was absent.

3.9 Metis Nation – Terry was absent.

3.10 Michel Creek and GN Road residents – Shelley

On July 11 there was an extreme wind event in the Sparwood area with up to 70km hour winds. It picked up dirt and dust from the clean coal stockpile at Elkview and blew toward some houses on Michel Creek Road and then turned and headed for Mountain View Traylor Park and Sparwood. It was warm and so a lot of people had windows open which made quite a mess. Teck put out a communication asking for people to contact them if they had been affected. As a result, Teck decided to have contractors clean the interior and exterior windows of affected homes. They also did carpets and brought in a contractor to clean furnace ducts. Thank you to Teck for doing that. It was a crazy event that deposited a lot of dirt and dust, but we appreciate you stepping up on that.

Questions, comments, and answers:

Sharon (C) – Some people also had siding and decks done too.

Shelley (Q) – How many people?

Sharon (A) – Probably close to 30.

Shelley (C) – There is not much else happening on Michel Creek Road but we see a lot of dirty vehicles and strobe lights. That is a serious concern because it makes it difficult to see the vehicle coming toward you.

Sharon (C) – Will put it in her calendar to remind personal to speak to employees and contractors about those concerns.

3.11 Motorized Recreation – Denise was absent.

3.12 Seniors

Anita announced that the Fernie Rotary Club is doing a senior's Christmas lunch. Teck has agreed to pay for lunch which will take place on December 8 for residents of the Elk Valley and South Country. There will be two sittings, one at eleven, and one at one, both with 50 people. It will take place at the senior drop-in centre. Seniors are doing the cooking and making some money off it. They must be fully vaccinated and have to register to save their seat. Anita will share the poster and asked that those in the group share with any seniors they know. There is no cost to attend. This event has happened since 2017 but not in 2020. It is an uplifting event especially for those who can't get out much.

Questions, comments, and answers:

Sharon (Q) – Will there be bussing?

Anita (A) – Not at this time but if there are a bunch of seniors that require bussing they will put out a call for Teck to assist with that.

Anita (C) – It sounds like 100 seats isn't very many but that is where we are at and a good place to start.

Sharon (C) – The Sparwood Community Response Network provides advocacy for seniors and isolation and loneliness has really been magnified for seniors in the community with Covid so this is wonderful.

Anita (C) – They are also doing their wine tree raffle with proceeds going to Cycling Without Age. They are hopefully going to be able to purchase another rikshaw to provide the ability for more seniors to be taken out. It would be nice to have this expand to Sparwood and Elkford. Some volunteers from Cycling Without Age will be helping at the senior's lunch.

Sharon (C) – Will send it to partners distribution list.

3.13 Social Programs – Kim was absent

Sharon (C) – Elkford Housing Society had a hiccup in that the cost of materials skyrocketed and so the budget had a large shortfall. They had hoped to break ground but are now taking a step back to see how they can make the budget work and are hoping to break ground in the spring. In Elkford childcare facilities are opening, some with flexible hours. That is a huge win for Elkford and the Elk Valley.

3.14 Teck – Sharon Strom

In addition to the July 11 dust event, Teck has continued to affect people's property, especially in Sparwood and Elkford. Last year they piloted a house washing program where they cleaned 348 homes in Sparwood. This year the pilot continued in Elkford, as well as those that were missed in Sparwood last year, with a total of 341 homes cleaned this year. People were very appreciative and gave great feedback. Teck is hoping to do it next summer, hopefully beginning in June. That is in response to dust complaints. Teck has also had some dirty vehicles in public places that were called in. From there the driver is identified and spoken to by their supervisor or Sharon.

Teck uses the Esso parking lot for employees who take the bus to Line creek and that had gotten off track with staff changes but is now back to normal which will relieve some parking pressure around the post office. Teck also received a few other pieces of feedback about erratic drivers. One was a video of a driver wobbling around the road, and then also some other complaints about driving. They were told to notify the RCMP but Teck also has talked to contract managers to share with them that they need to act appropriately on the road. One person commented that it improved. In October there was one loud blast. We went to the subject matter experts to get information to share with the complainant. They didn't exceed any noise or vibration levels but sometimes the clouds and other factors make it more noticeable.

Teck has put out some positive messaging. One is that Teck is making inroads with institutions to make them safer with anti-microbial copper. They are now used in the Vancouver and Toronto transit systems. Teck also recognized Truth and Reconciliation Day. Though they did not take the day off they gifted all employees an Indigenous focused book. Teck was also named as a top employer by Forbes and as one of Canada's top 100 Employers. There has been some news about the rails being washed out and the impact that has had on shipping. They are still getting raw coal out of the ground and hopefully those passages will be put back to order. Teck donated \$250,000 for flood relief efforts to the Red Cross and SPCA.

3.15 Youth – The committee is still waiting for a representative for this.

Old Business

4.1 Action items review – None.

New Business

5.1 Teck feedback received – Sharon (see section 3.14 above)

5.2 Teck updates – Sharon (see section 3.14 above)

5.3 Fernie Fix ads for January and February

Sharon (C) – The COIAI has a monthly slot in the Fernie Fix and any member group can use that space for free, such as for upcoming events. It is due around the middle of the month. If you have an idea for it please contact Sharon.

5.4 2021/2022 Executive – Anita

In July everyone said they wanted to continue in their roles. The group needs a youth representative and someone to replace Joanne. This also means there are no Crowsnest Pass representatives so it might make sense to find a student from the high school in the Crowsnest Pass. Sharon nominated Anita to stay as chair. Shelley seconded. Anita accepted. Sharon will put an email out to find out if anyone is interested in being Vice-Chair.

5.5 2021/2022 Strategic Objectives

Sharon pulled up the terms of reference to review the strategic objectives which is done annually.

Objectives

Continue to enhance awareness of and hold Teck accountable for sustainability goals and commitments throughout the communities of interest

Chad (Q) – Are the sustainability goals defined?

Sharon (A) – Yes, they are. One example is Toward Sustainable Mining where Teck aims for AAA status. Sharon will provide these resources to Chad and the group. One way this is supported in this group is the partners meeting by presenting on mitigations, like fugitive dust management techniques.

Anita (C) – They do act on that. This is a great group for raising issues that Teck doesn't see. This is the place to bring it forward.

Continue to identify and communicate to Teck the priorities of area communities

No comments.

Continue to support initiatives that aim to mitigate childcare issues

Sharon (C) – There are now new spaces in Elkford. The Childcare Advisory Group worked with different communities. They developed a Facebook site in each community. It seems as though the group may have done all they can, and it may not be as big of a focus now.

Anita (C) – COTR is starting a dual credit program with the high school where they can take Child, Youth, and Families courses which are course that early childhood educators take.

Sharon (C) – One challenge is that you can open the sites but finding qualified childcare workers is difficult, especially when they don't get a great wage or benefits and can cross the border into Alberta and get \$25/hour.

Provide information and resources to youth who graduate high school with intent of seeking employment with Teck and other businesses



Sharon (C) – Where this came from is that local youth weren't aware of all the kinds of jobs available at Teck, for example the fish team and water leads. The thought was that providing them with info on types of work that is out there while in high school might be helpful for them.

Creighton (C) – We do tours with a lot of schools at sites. To my knowledge yes, there was stuff done last year.

Shelley (C) – If young people want to stay in the valley, it is important for them to know what they should have on their resume. That is very important for our youth here.

Anita (C) – We may need to add a strategy for that.

Support the maintenance or enhancement of current healthcare services and community wellness in the region including the enhancement of senior living and affordable housing for all

Sharon (C) – Elkford has lost emergency services, maybe this group can do something about that. Poverty exists in a big way here that people don't realize. There was no senior housing in Elkford and so the Elkford Housing Society has come from that.

Support and encourage the enhancement of post-secondary education in the Elk Valley

No comments

Support the development of and participation in Teck's Closure Task Group

Sharon (C) – This one can be taken out. It was in response to Coal Mountain closure.

Support integration of public awareness and knowledge of regional Indigenous peoples and ongoing reconciliation.

No comments.

Sharon will send out the word version of this so that people can add comments.

Strategies

Continue to hold quarterly Steering Committee meetings and biannual Advisory Partners meetings at which Teck feedback reports and announcements are shared and for which the minutes are distributed and posted for public review

Sharon is getting the meeting notes back on track.

Support the understanding and implementation of the Teck-initiated but not Teck-led Cumulative Effects Management Framework (CEMF)

Chad (C) – The CEMF seems to have fizzled out but they are hoping the new collaborative one will take its place for aquatic work.

Sharon (C) – Maybe this could be rewritten with the new program instead.

Chad to have a closer look at that.

Actively promote and advertise the Initiative and its website (www.evcnpvoice.com) with options that may include print, radio and social media

Sharon (C) – Claris is willing to help with social media presence.

Consult with Teck Human Resources, Livingstone Range SD, SD#5 and College of the Rockies personnel to determine what steps local youth can take to better prepare themselves for employment with Teck and other community businesses

No comment.

Commit to holding Health Care Task Force meetings with a current focus on poverty reduction, housing affordability and mental wellness

No comment.

Actively advocate for the construction of a post-secondary facility in the Elk Valley to enhance programming

Anita (C) – Simon was hoping to partner with UBC to bring in water quality or something like that.

Partners Guest speakers:

Doug Newberry from the Sparwood Community Response Network would be a good option. He is a mentor for the region and can share some of that. One of the last events they did was bringing lasagna lunches to seniors with information. That led to 2 referrals for someone who needed support, which is huge! Shelley did some of the special deliveries and the bonus was she was invited in and had wonderful conversations with folks who don't get many visitors. Shelley said it was a wonderful experience. Everyone was supportive of Doug presenting.

Taylor Jenkins was considered but they said it would be better to wait until they had more to present on.

Robin Peel with community futures is an option. They always have great updates.

Rory will do one for Teck. There may also be a project person for Teck.

It might be nice to have someone to speak on truth and reconciliation. Joanne Allard might be the best person to ask about that. Anita noted that it needs to be the right person, and that we don't want to speak for Indigenous people about truth and reconciliation.

Some ideas from the past are that we've had speakers on mental health, grizzly bear studies, and housing updates.

Anita (C) – If we have time for both it might be time to do a housing update.
Sharon will look into scheduling to see what we have time for.

Anita closed the meeting at 2:45

Action Items

Sharon

- Contact the rest of the committee members to see if there is interest in co-chair position and to distribute the terms of reference in word so people can make comments (with closure taskforce highlighted to come out).
- Provide sustainability goals from Teck.
- Look at schedule and agenda for partners meeting to see if we can fit everyone in.
- Send out time and agenda for partners meeting on Dec 15.
- Remind employees and contractors about dirty vehicles and strobe lights, as noted by Shelley.
- Send notice about senior's lunch to partner's list.

Chad

- Give thought to presenting in July.

Anita

- Share info about senior's lunch and wine tree raffle.

All

- Distribute info about senior's lunch and wine tree raffle.
- Provide comments on strategic direction for 2021-2022.

Next Meetings: Partners – December 15, 2021 (Sharon will send out time and agenda)
Steering Committee – March 2022

Attendance

Name	Representing
Besplug, Mariah	Teck
Glober, Creighton	Employment/Teck
Hughes, Chad	Environment/ Elk River Alliance/Fernie
Palmer, Anita	Education/COTR/RDEKA/Chair
Robinson, Scott	Community Safety/RDEKA
Strom, Sharon	Teck
Wedderburn, Shelley	Michel Creek and GN Road Residents/Sparwood

Absent

Name	Representing
Allard, Johanne	Ktunaxa Nation



ELK VALLEY / CROWSNEST PASS
COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST
ADVISORY INITIATIVE

A Key to Community Sustainability

Anonson, Terri	Metis Nation BC/Elkford
Bauer, Kim	Social Programs/Elkford
Bertrand, Denise	Motorized Rec/Elkford
Christensen, Jason	District of Sparwood
Howse, Simon	Housing/Business/Fernie
Tomlinson, Leala	Interior Health
Wall, Kerri	Interior Health