

WRCPC Agenda

November 12, 2021

9:00 am to 11:30 am

Video Conference

Chair: Richard Eibach

Minutes: M A. Allen

1. Territorial Acknowledgement vs Land Acknowledgement – Clarence Cachagee (15 min)
2. Welcome & Territorial Acknowledgement – Richard Eibach (5 min)
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Declaration of Conflict of Interest
5. Approval of the October 15, 2021, Minutes (attached)
 - 5.1 Business Arising
6. Group Norms Discussion – Lu Roberts (30 min)
7. Standing Items:
 - a. Indigenous Peoples Update (5 min)
 - b. Regional Councillor Update (5 min)
 - c. Regional Liaison: Proposal Report Process Update (10 min) – Info. only
8. Nominating Committee Update – Irene O’Toole (10 min)
9. Break: (10 min)
10. Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls for Actions & Sectors (30 min)
 - a. Kathy Payette – Lutherwood
11. Motion: Drugs Action Team Position Paper Discussion – Sara Escobar (15 min)
12. Executive Director update – Deb Bergey (5 min)
13. Other Business
14. Adjournment

WRPCPC Minutes

October 15, 2021

9:00 am to 11:30 am

Video Conference

Present: Amanda Trites, Andrew Jackson, Chris Cowie, Clarence Cachagee, Doug McKlusky, Irene O'Toole, James Bond, Janice Ouellette, Joe-Ann McComb, Jonathan English, Judah Oudshoorn, Kathy Payette, Lu Roberts, Mark Pancer, Patricia Moore, Peter Ringrose, Richard Eibach, Rosslyn Bentley, Sara Escobar, Sharon Ward Zeller, Tom Galloway, Trisha Robinson

Regrets: Angela Vanderheyden, Barry McClinchey, Bryan Larkin and Jamie Sheridan, Cathy Harrington, David Jaeger, Dave Dunk, Jenn Hutton, John Goodman, John Shewchuk, Karen Spencer, Kathryn McGarry, Sarah Shafiq, Sue Weare

Staff: Deb Bergey, Abbi Longmire, Julie Thompson, Michael Parkinson, Shama Saleh

Guests: Angela Beecher on behalf of Dave Dunk

Chair: Richard Eibach

Minutes: Shama Saleh

1. Land Acknowledgement;

Land Acknowledgement provided by Richard Eibach

2. Welcome:

WRPCPC members and guests were welcomed and introductions were made.

3. Approval of Agenda:

Moved by Andrew Jackson

Seconded by Irene O'Toole

Carried

4. Declaration of Conflict of Interest:

None

5. Approval of the June 11, 2021, Minutes:

Moved by Mark Pancer

Seconded by Sharon Ward-Zeller

Carried

5.1 Business Arising:

None

6. Standing Items:

a. Update on Indigenous Issues

Lu provided an update. The Six Nations, Mohawk Institute and other nations are going to start looking for grave sites. There is a resource that provides a colour coded map of former residential schools sites:

<https://globalnews.ca/news/8074453/mapping-the-missing-former-residential-school-sites-in-canada-and-the-search-for-unmarked-graves/>. The residential schools close to us are going to start their search for gravesites and resources and support are needed.

Dec 8, 2021 will be a celebration at Lu's organization, Waterloo Region Community Legal Services, for making it to 5 years. Promotion and emails will be out very soon.

b. Regional Councillor Update:

Tom Galloway shared that it is currently budget time and there is a survey being circulated. Everyone was encouraged to provide feedback and comments in the survey before the due date.

Dr. Wang is reporting that our COVID-19 numbers are improving, but the ROW is still in a state of concern, and we should take precautions. We now require mandatory double vaccination for non-essential services by the Region, such as the library and museums.

Tom provided an update about the Cambridge Consumption Site. Cambridge is making the request for a site. Consent needs to be given by all municipalities. Kitchener gave their consent a while back, but has been waiting on other municipalities. There are still a few more steps needed, but the federal government has approved the substances that the CTS will be using/working with. WRCPD began the conversations around CTS and should take great pride in this.

On Tuesday Oct. 12, 2021, Richard and Chris presented to Regional Council about WRCPD and CJI's proposal and did a fantastic job. It was a very comprehensive and concise proposal. The video of that meeting is available online. There was pretty broad support from Council for the proposal. The

outcome of the meeting is that staff are to come back with a report that Council can work with. This will hopefully happen in a month or so.

An in-camera discussion will take place after the meeting on what will happen with the proposal moving forward.

a. Regional Liaison update:

No update.

7. Truth and Reconciliation:

Irene O'Toole provide the background that our workaround TRC started back in 2015 and that a working group was created to look at the TRC Call to Actions. The group was led and guided by a Métis person named Derrick. The final report that the working group created was posted. The work was put on hold. We must come back to this work. The strategic retreat we had on TRC a few weeks ago is a start to getting back on track. We will be going around to each council member to provide feedback on how we could implement TRC into WRPC's work.

Members identified the following potential actions:

- A member identified number 30 in the TRC Calls to Action. "We callover-representation in custody" There is work required to reform the judicial system and consider other alternatives to incarceration. Judges have stated they do not have other options for Indigenous people. It was recognized that we need to steer people away from the justice system.
- A member was interested in a baseline of what do we have access to, what services do we have and recommendations to training people to divert them away from systems and doing Gladue reports.
- A member is a Gladue writer and identified there is a shortage of Gladue writers. In some cases, lawyers convinced clients not to do Gladue reports because of the time delay.
- A member identified that Gladue reports are expensive (\$10,000) and there is a backlog of up to 6 months to access a Gladue report. Indigenous members have been challenged, and discredited on the worthiness of utilizing Gladue reports in the courts, especially in the criminal and the family courts. Legal Aid Ontario is looking into the issues around utilizing and challenges around Gladue reports.
- A member identified TRC Call to Action number 63 – 'Teaching curriculums on residential schools and history' 'Intercultural'. A language class will be implemented soon in the schools, and an environmental program using a land based Indigenous garden where we can use infuse learnings from the Indigenous garden into their program.

- A member reminded we should avoid tokenism and cultural appropriation. There are many of Indigenous professionals that should be put in certain positions, rather than non-Indigenous people.
- Over the last few months the Cambridge organizations and communities have committed to action #66 'We call upon the federal government to establish multiyear funding for community-based youth organizations to deliver programs on reconciliation, and establish a national network to share information and best practices' for youth programs'. There have been many conversations with Indigenous community members to make the community centres more accessible. The City of Cambridge is providing space at Community Centres and facilities for Indigenous community spaces at no charge. These are some of the changes that the Cambridge communities are working on and is ongoing.
- A member identified she knows that there is a 12-week wait for a Gladue report to be created, but often it gets delayed because it's not done or not available. It can be pushed out to 4-6 months. In the North, some charges were stayed because Gladue reports were so backlogged and unavailable. It is the right of an Indigenous person to have a Gladue report, but in those particular cases, there were Indigenous women who were victims of that offence. It is important that we do not forget that it is not only Indigenous offenders involved in our justice system, but also there are also Indigenous victims that are women and children. We should look at things from both sides. While there is direction to look at alternatives to incarceration, there are unfortunately not many alternatives for judges to consider diverting Indigenous people from incarceration. Education about alternatives and building up an infrastructure of alternatives is needed.
- A member suggested WRCPD can come in and build that knowledge and information around alternatives to start building that infrastructure for judges and others in diverting Indigenous people from the prison system. We could amplify the examples of other communities that are doing this.
- A member who took the Gladue training noted that one section of the report is to identify alternatives. However, it is apparent that there are not many alternatives at certain levels of government. When a person is federally incarcerated, there seems to be more resources available for them. They need to have a sentence of 2 years or longer, and often Indigenous people are sentenced for less than 2 years. When they are provincially sentenced, their term is longer, so I think what we could advocate for, as council, is to get those resources at those lower levels. Also in legal aid, if there is no jail sentence recommended by the Crown, people often do not qualify for legal aid or representation for their lawyer. This is another issue that could be looked at.
- A member stated it is lack of education and information. Action #24 would address this 'We call upon medical and nursing schools in Canada to require all students to take a course dealing with Aboriginal health issues, including the history and legacy

of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, and Indigenous teachings and practices. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.’ We have a nursing and medical school in this city that we’re connected to. We could find out what they are offering. There is a history in this community of mistreatment and miscommunication of all folks, but Indigenous folks in particular. We know the history and stories that have gone on every day with people trying to access medical care, so the schools are a place to consider.

- A member identified that TRC #1- #5 resonated the most for them. Locally, Family and Children Services have a good relationship with organizations in the community. There is still a lot of work that needs to be done, but this is a good area to provide further input and get a better understanding. More advocacy could be needed.
- A member identified action #66 ‘to establish multi-year funding for community-based youth organizations to deliver programs on reconciliation and establish a national network to share information and best practices’ that resonated with him, especially when thinking upstream. Engaging Indigenous youth for our youth engagement work at CPC will be critical.
- Another member identified action #43 – ‘We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation.’ They were not sure if the Region has adopted this declaration, but if not, we should. Tom Galloway, will look into the declaration at the regional level.
- A member identified action #40 – ‘We call on all levels of government, in collaboration with Aboriginal people, to create adequately funded and accessible Aboriginal – specific victim programs and services with appropriate evaluation mechanisms’. WRCPC could advocate for funding and more resources for these programs. Evaluation mechanisms have been brought up a few times. Maybe we could call on Universities to provide free services to help supplement evaluations. There is a lot of expertise in our community that may be utilized for these purposes.
- A member identified action #22 – ‘We call upon those who can effect change within the Canadian health-care system to recognize the value of Aboriginal healing practices and use them in the treatment of Aboriginal patients in collaboration with Aboriginal healers and Elders were requested by Aboriginal patients’ validating the options for Indigenous healing which links to the conversation we’ve already had about the alternatives to justice. The same should be true for healthcare systems. Taking the work of CPC and linking it back to healthcare. CPC could advocate to Ontario health (broader level) to make sure healthcare responds (i.e., early childhood development, referrals to child’s welfare systems that come from healthcare and educators). This could include an opportunity to recommend including knowledge of these services and competencies in the medical and nursing schools.

- A member recommended qualifying Indigenous methodology in all areas and systems to the same level of Western methodologies/approaches is important. For example, in the work with ODSP, there is so much weight put on the medical report to determine if an individual is disabled or not. There is not a lot of weight put on the traditional or alternative healing methods/Indigenous healing methods. There are Indigenous elders who just are not qualified at the same level, and they should be. ODSP stresses looking at the whole person. We have the whole person approach, but adjudicators/judges do not see/qualify these approaches when making decisions. There is especially distrust around the healthcare systems and the racism involved in it. In qualifying, our knowledge needs to be uplifted and prioritized.

Irene O'Toole summarized that we must prioritize what we want to start focusing on, and we need Indigenous leaders to guide the process. There needs to be many people from the community to be a part of the process.

One of the themes from the discussion revolved around Education, Evaluations and Discussions on the systems levels. Education, criminal justice and healthcare system keeps coming up. We could potentially focus on these systems in relation to the TRC calls.

A member suggested we should have further conversations on ordering these themes and making connections, i.e., committees and working groups. We should ground our work in the foundational treaties that were made between settlers and Indigenous peoples. Are we really going about this work by honouring treaties and Indigenous ways? If not, we should. Going back to our conversations about Gladue, one of the real barriers to the implementation of Gladue has been settler ideas of what accounts the seriousness of crime. Alternatives have not been implemented when deemed certain levels of seriousness and there are mechanisms and laws that impede the implementation of Gladue, such as mandatory minimums among other things. We need alternatives to deal with the seriousness of certain offences. This is an example. There is importance of having conversations around implementing these things in a way that honours Indigenous sovereignty and Indigenous perspectives, and going back to the foundational treaties, which are international agreements and treaties. The start of our work could be talking about some of these foundational commitments that we've made that we have to go back too. Indigenous people should not be reminding us and educating us on this, but we as settler people should think about what commitments have been made and are we actually following through on them, and how do we go about implementing each of these recommendations based on the foundational treaties. The concern is when we hear 'We have to do better around educating' is that's all we have ever done, but we do not ever shift the power relationships that exist.

Actions items:

The following people will take this information back and bring back a report of the status of this work at their organization. They'll think of ways WRCPC can help push TRC forward within our organization and in the different systems we're connected to:

- James Bond: Educational system
- Peter Ringrose and Karen Spencer: Family and Children services
- Joe-Ann McComb and Mark Pancer: Youth/Neighbourhood work
- Rosslyn Bentley and Kathy Payette: Healthcare system(s)
- Judah Oudshoorn: TRC #22 - #35, Justice System. Judah can bring back more info about Gladue, alternatives, etc. Anyone who wants to delve into #22 - #35 on TRC, contact Judah.
- Tom Galloway can let us know about declaration of UNDRIP at the Region level.

Indigenous people on council can be used as resources and guides while we work through this.

A member noted it is important to recognize that we are going to make mistakes, but to continue learning through them and not stopping.

Break (5min)

8. Working Group Updates

- **Anti-racism Working Group – Update and Motion:**

Lu Robert presented on behalf of the Anti-racism working group. The Working Group met a couple of weeks ago, and had a meeting with Tara Bedard from Immigration Partnership on the Governance Review that they conducted internally. The partnership held some education for members as well. Her guidance has provided a lot of information for us to start. We are still in the beginning stages, and it is a massive undertaking, but we can definitely get it done.

The last week of September, was the first National Truth and Reconciliation Day, so WRCPC released many social media posts and the working group provided feedback on those.

- **Waterloo Region Youth Engagement Strategy (WR-YES):**

Mark Pancer provided an update on the Partnership Action Working Group that was created between CJI and WRCPC to learn about each other and prove that they could work together. The focus and first project quickly became the youth engagement work. The work has been moving forward successfully and had really great commitment from council members throughout the summer.

Youth Engagement group will have a focus on BIPOC youth, who will be brought together to focus on youth issues. The commitment will be 3 months and these will be paid positions. The notice to organizations will be coming out soon. Several grant applications were submitted. No responses have been received.

9. Urgent Public Health Needs Sites (UPHNS) Update:

Irene O'Toole provided an update on the Drugs Action Team. This is an ad hoc committee created by WRCPC in January 2021. The group has been active and been meeting regularly with Irene and Sara Escobar as co-chairs. Committee members include, Jessie Burt, Kourtney King, Judah Oudshoorn, and Jennifer Mains.

Direct service staff/workers recently met with five Regional councillors (Tom Galloway, Kathryn McGarry, Elizabeth Clarke, Jim Erb, and Karen Redman).

Sara Escobar shared that there were many great conversations in that meeting. Direct service staff were trying to bring the real/human aspect to the conversation. When we focus on the numbers, there is a lot that is missed. Councillors asked questions about what this work looks like on the ground, and the real impacts it is having not just on the people experiencing overdoses and homelessness, but the traumatic impacts the poisoning crisis is having on workers, and what could prevent the trauma in the future.

The Councillors were supportive and receptive to know what the needs are. Councillors requested a list of solutions that the group will provide.

MPP Lindo recently met with Sara Escobar, Michael Parkinson, and Deb Bergey. One of the biggest things that came out of that meeting is she wishes to stay connected with WRCPC, drug-related issues and continue to hear directly from this traumatized workforce. MPP Lindo is requesting a formal sit down with Jagmeet Sing to bring issues directly. A livestreams/podcast with MPP Lindo on these issues is anticipated.

Irene O'Toole shared that the WRCPC is exploring a joint effort with MPP Lindo to highlight the work of Dr. Alvin Curling, given his world-class "Roots of Youth Violence" report co-authored with Roy McMurtry, and WRCPC and area youth's involvement in the report.

Michael Parkinson shared that Jessie Burt, who presented to Council in December 2020, and is a member of the ad hoc subcommittee, is doing a fundraiser in support of five local agencies (Hockey Helps The Homeless). He is currently in Iceland and unable to fundraise, so support would be appreciated.

The 'She Is Your Neighbour' Podcast c/o Women's Crisis Services did an exceptional job, with Michael Parkinson and Jessica Hutchinson being a part of the episodes. Michael extended gratitude to staff of WCSWR for the podcasts' successes.

In the Waterloo region, it is estimated that 120 un-prevented accidental poisonings have occurred so far this year. Perhaps 20 of those people lacked stable housing. This

amount is six times the total rate of people that died in automobile accidents in 2020, and three times the total number of people that died from SARS across Canada in 2003. There is tremendous frustration in communities with the perception that this issue is more of a spectator sport vs a public health emergency.

The Waterloo Region Integrated Drugs Strategy is in the process of rethinking of their work, the structural determinants of the WRIDS, and recognizing, outside of the WRIDS, these issues are systemic and structural lacking an urgent and proportional response.

The Safe Supply Project – Council helped facilitate the establishment of a \$2.5m Health Canada grant project coming into this community to support safe supply. It is not enough to meet current demand, with too many eligible participants expected to die before access to the program is possible. An amazing staff team and excellent evaluators have been hired, and the patient roster is growing. Hiring prescribers is a challenge. The Health Canada grant expires in March 2022, and it is unclear if another source of funding will be secured.

The WRPCPC made two motions earlier in the summer:

1. Letter for expansion of safe supply
2. Funding for overdose prevention sites via the Urgent Public Health Need (UPHNS) exemption process

As per Council's motion in June, WRPCPC staff have worked to facilitate the establishment of Urgent Public Health Needs Sites. Some applications are in, and others in progress. The barrier locally around this work is funding, and the bureaucracy around big systems that could prevent trauma to direct service staff, and poisoning deaths and injuries.

Michael will be requesting a generic letter to garner support for more UPHNS sites from Council members to support local applications to Health Canada.

10. Andrew Jackson Farewell:

Andrew Jackson is stepping away from Council to allow him to focus on other community work. He expressed his gratitude to CPC and his support for the directions that CPC is taking in future. Council members expressed their gratitude to Andrew and noted the many accomplishments on his time on Council. He noted he will be available to us, if need be, despite stepping away from Council.

11. Executive Director Update:

Carried forward

12. Follow-up from Follow-up from October 12th Presentation:

Carried forward

13. Other Business

None.

14. Adjournment:

Moved by Irene O'Toole

Seconded by Doug

Carried at 11:36 a.m.