



## **RESTORATIVE JUSTICE COMMITTEE (RJC)**

**August 31, 2021**

**Meeting held electronically under Ministerial Order No. M192**

### **MINUTES**

#### **VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Councillor Chuck Puchmayr	- Chair, City Council Member
Amanda Semenoff	- Alternate Chair, Community Member
Pamela Craven	- School District 40 (SD40) Representative
Stacey Ferguson	- Community Member
Alvin Kube	- New Westminster Indigenous Court Representative
Gurinder Mann	- Communities Embracing Restorative Action (CERA) Representative

#### **VOTING MEMBER REGRETS:**

Savanna Pelech	- Community Member
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#### **STAFF PRESENT:**

Constable John MacDonald	- New Westminster Police Department (NWPD) Representative
Bailey Keeler	- New Westminster Victim Assistance Association (NWVAA)
Carilyn Cook	- Committee Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

Amanda Semenoff assumed the Chair.

#### **1.0 ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO AGENDA**

#### **MOVED AND SECONDED**

*THAT the August 31, 2021 Restorative Justice Committee meeting agenda be adopted as circulated.*

**CARRIED.**

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

## **2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

### **2.1 Adoption of the Minutes of the March 30, 2021 Restorative Justice Committee Meeting**

#### **MOVED AND SECONDED**

*THAT the March 30, 2021 Restorative Justice Committee minutes be adopted as circulated.*

**CARRIED.**

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

## **3.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **3.1 Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls - Recommendations to Council and/or the Provincial Court System to Inform a Local Approach – Councillor Puchmayr (Standing Item)**

Councillor Puchmayr advised that, as this is an ongoing item, Indigenous friends should be invited to Restorative Justice Committee meetings to share their perspectives on this issue. He noted that Lillian Howard from the Indigenous Student Services at Douglas College, and who has experience at a residential school, has expressed interest in speaking with Committee members on this topic. Additionally, the Committee should reach out to the strong advocates across Canada to share the changes they would like to occur, as opposed to us making that determination on their behalf.

Alvin Kube, New Westminster Indigenous Court Representative, offered to invite a guest who was directly involved in creating the Report and shared a booklet titled, “Calls for Justice” which summarizes the recommendations and may have key areas that the Committee could follow up on.

Discussion ensued and Committee members provided the following comments:

- Members expressed support to invite those with lived experience to meetings;
- The Committee must have a strong commitment to take action on the traumatic stories we may hear from lived-experience guests;
- The onus will be on the Committee to ensure that guests understand how municipal government works and what our limitations may be;
- One place to facilitate change is in the Police Calls to Action as this can be accomplished at a municipal level; however, we must determine other areas where the Committee could be effective;

- New Westminster Police Department (NWDP) good news stories, departmental advances, initiatives, and hiring practices should be shared with the community and other municipalities; and,
- The Committee acknowledged that policing is a tough job with members expected to lead normal lives while dealing with a lot of harsh and traumatic experiences, and that while there are a lot of good police officers, earning the trust of the younger Indigenous generation is very challenging.

Constable John MacDonald, New Westminster Police Department Representative, will provide an update at the next meeting regarding the Department's actions to address the recommendations, specifically those in Section 9 of the Report. As well, he will invite Inspector Diana McDaniel, author of the NWPD report in response to the Calls for Justice, to the next meeting.

### **3.2 State of First Nation's Court**

Alvin Kube, New Westminster Indigenous Court Representative and an Elder with the Court, shared the following information with respect to the First Nation's Court:

- The Court has moved back to the Anvil Centre which is an appropriate space for the sessions;
- In order to accommodate the overwhelming number of referrals to the Court, court dates may have to be added;
- Links to resources during the sessions are very good; however, the cases are always difficult and challenging;
- He continues to building up trusting, quality, and well-balanced relationships with a number of clients that will open them to receive the guidance and advice that will influence them to move in the right direction; and,
- Some clients need to receive strong direction from the Elders as many of the clients have been in the system throughout their lives.

Councillor Puchmayr announced that he has been asked to continue on the First Nations Court Planning Committee once it reconvenes, noting that another venue, other than the Anvil Centre, is being considered for use as a court space as the Anvil Centre gets back into hosting conferences, etc. Confirmation of the new space is hoped to be announced soon.

## **4.0 NEW BUSINESS**

### **4.1 Anvil Centre Default Lighting**

Councillor Puchmayr advised that he contacted staff at the Anvil Centre to request that they light up the outside of the facility with orange lights, in acknowledgement of the recent residential school discoveries. He shared that he would like to see

orange as the default colour for the Anvil Centre unless they are requested to light up in honour of another occasion.

#### **MOVED AND SECONDED**

*THAT, in acknowledgement of the recent discoveries at residential schools, the Restorative Justice Committee requests that the Anvil Centre have orange as their default outside lighting colour.*

**CARRIED.**

All members of the Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

### **4.2 Kamloops Residential School**

Councillor Puchmayr acknowledged that the discoveries have expanded since the findings at the Kamloops Residential School, noting that this would be an appropriate issue for visiting speakers to address.

Discussion ensued and Committee members provided the following comments:

- The Committee agreed that residential schools should be a standing item on Committee agendas moving forward;
- September 30, 2021, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, will be observed as a Statutory Holiday in the City this year and will be reviewed for following years. Upcoming events of remembrance will be circulated to the Committee;
- Any statistic that you look at will reflect how poorly Indigenous people are doing and, although challenging and requiring a massive effort, we need to find ways to improve conditions of all Indigenous people;
- Indigenous people must be a part of the economy, and the many roadblocks they encounter which inhibit their ability to contribute to society and succeed, must be removed;
- Education to facilitate growth and support employment must be provided, too, as the unemployment rate is very high among Indigenous people; and
- The disturbing and heartbreaking findings at residential schools is a wake up call for the entire nation.

### **4.3 Chief Ahan Event – Update**

Councillor Puchmayr shared that the Chief Ahan event was very successful and was attended by over 35 guests including those from New Westminster's Indigenous sister communities of the T̓silhqot'in Nation, Member of Parliament, Peter Julian, and the Honourable Jennifer Whiteside. He stated that there was drumming and singing and a lunch provided to attendees.

## **5.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION**

### **5.1 New Westminster Police Department (NWPD)**

Constable MacDonald, NWPD Representative, advised that there was nothing new to share since the last meeting and confirmed that he would provide an update on how the Department will address recommendations outlined in the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

### **5.2 Communities Embracing Restorative Action (CERA)**

Gurinder Mann, CERA Representative, provided the following report:

- A wallet-size referral card will soon be provided for all officers of the New Westminster Police Department to refer to if they are in a situation where restorative justice may be appropriate;
- They are still awaiting the new Memorandum of Understanding with Crown Council, which was delayed due to the pandemic;
- CERA continues to be passionate about reinforcing its relationship with First Nations; and,
- It is nice that New Westminster is so dedicated to restorative justice and CERA looks forward to working with Chief Dave Jansen.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Mann provided the following comments:

- Situations that could warrant a restorative justice referral from the police range from theft, break and entry, and assault, and those that would not be appropriate include those with very noticeable mental health issues and/or communication challenges, hate crimes, sexual assault, and domestic abuse;
- Each case is different and even those seemingly straightforward on the outset can become very complex; and,
- Referral information can be shared with police dispatch as they may see certain patterns occur in the calls they receive.

Pamela Craven, School District 40 (SD40) Representative, thanked Mr. Mann and CERA for the restorative justice videos they shared with the school district, noting that they were very helpful in supporting the kids. She advised that they will be sent out again as the new school year starts.

### **5.3 New Westminster Victim Assistance Association**

Bailey Keeler, NWVAA Representative, shared the following updates:

- Currently, they have no active restorative justice files but have seen an increase in death-related files with the opioid crisis being an area of concern as well as the increase in domestic violence;
- The volunteer program will continue to be on hold until at least January 2022; and,
- Attended San'yas Indigenous Cultural Safety Training, through the Minister of Public Safety, which is now being taken by two New Westminster Police Officers as part of a pilot project. The training would be beneficial for anyone to take and could be tailored towards specific groups.

### **5.4 School District 40 (SD 40)**

Pamela Craven, School District 40 (SD40) Representative, announced that schools will also be closed in honour of the September 30<sup>th</sup> National Day of Truth and Reconciliation and that students will be participating in related learnings leading up to the day.

The Committee agreed that a report from School District 40 (SD 40) be a standing item on agendas moving forward.

## **6.0 NEXT MEETING DATE**

To be determined.

## **7.0 ADJOURNMENT**

**ON MOTION**, the meeting was adjourned at 6:08 p.m.

Certified Correct,

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**Councillor Puchmayr**  
**Chair**

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**Carilyn Cook**  
**Committee Clerk**