



**RESTORATIVE JUSTICE COMMITTEE  
(RJC)**

**January 12, 2021**

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

**MINUTES**

**VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:**

- |                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Councillor Chuck Puchmayr | - Chair, City Council Member                                     |
| Amanda Semenoff           | - Alternate Chair, Community Member                              |
| Gurinder Mann             | - Communities Embracing Restorative Action (CERA) Representative |
| Savanna Pelech            | - Community Member   |

**VOTING MEMBER REGRETS:**

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Stacey Ferguson | - Community Member                         |
| Pamela Craven   | - School District 40 (SD40) Representative |

**GUEST:**

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Alvin Kube | - New Westminister Indigenous Court Representative |
|------------|--|

**STAFF PRESENT:**

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Constable Tim Callaghan | - New Westminister Police Department (NWPD) Representative |
| Bailey Keeler           | - New Westminister Victim Assistance Association (NWVAA)   |
| Heather Corbett         | - Committee Clerk  |
| Carilyn Cook            | - Committee Clerk  |

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

Amanda Semenoff assumed the Chair and Councillor Puchmayr introduced Mr. Alvin Kube, First Nation's Court Elder and Representative.

## 1.1 Additions/Deletions to Agenda

### **MOVED AND SECONDED**

*THAT the January 12, 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 November 24, 2020 Meeting

#### **MOVED AND SECONDED**

*THAT the November 24, 2021 Restorative Justice Committee minutes be adopted as circulated.*

**CARRIED.**

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

## 3.0 PRESENTATIONS

There were no items.

## 4.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### 4.1 **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 reminded members that this item came to the Committee through a directive from Council to assist in determining what steps the City can take to address points that came from the National Inquiry, and that it will be a standing item on the agenda until such time that all branches of government are working on the Report's recommendations.

Councillor Puchmayr recapped the Committee's discussion from the November 24, 2020 meeting regarding the New Westminster Police Department's report in response to the Calls for Justice which took place with Chief Dave Jansen and Inspector Diana McDaniel, the author of the report.

Additionally, Councillor Puchmayr suggested that the Committee review the terms of reference of the parliamentary committee which will be reviewing and reforming the Police Act to determine how the RJC can participate in the work being done.

He noted that there is an avenue to provide submissions regarding how police reform will impact Indigenous communities.

## 4.2 State of First Nations Court

Mr. Kube shared of his experiences working with Indigenous offenders (clients) as an Elder in the First Nations Court, while working with Corrections Canada, and in other career capacities, noting that:

- The goal of the First Nations Court is to provide clients with the opportunity for behavioural change through constructive advice which may develop into a parental role with the Court's Elders;
- It is the clients decision to participate in the First Nations Court process and forging healthy relationships with them can facilitate rehabilitation, leaving the client open to adopting a "be honest, live with integrity, do good for your common man" way of living;
- Longer time with clients would see a greater positive impact on their lives and their return to the community;
- Many Indigenous prisoners have traumatic backgrounds of physical and mental abuse, fetal alcohol syndrome, addiction issues, etc., and often start out in the system in juvenile court;
- In addition to the court Liaison Officer and Elders providing direction and guidance to clients, they may accompany clients to sweat lodges and other Indigenous ceremonies as it is important for clients to be involved in their own culture;
- While the First Nations Court provides a friendlier and more engaging process for Indigenous offenders compared to the regular court system, it requires funding to expand and provide the best services possible;
- Offenders who wish to participate in the First Nations Court must be properly vetted to ensure that they will not take advantage of the process; and,
- The Court is being held at Anvil Centre to ensure compliance with pandemic-related protocols and will move to Inn at the Quay soon.

In response to a question from a Committee member, Mr. Kube advised that, other than coordinating resources to ensure that proper referrals are being made to the Court, he could think of nothing else to facilitate the support of clients or work done in the Court; however, after the meeting he will reflect on it further and let the Committee know of anything else that may be of assistance.

Discussion ensued and Committee members provided the following comments:

- This is an important program which most of the Committee have attended after hearing about it from Judge Garth Smith two years ago. As observers,

Committee members found the proceedings both inspirational and emotional; and,

- Housing is a huge issue and a key piece in people remaining “stuck” and dealing with addictions; however, the Lookout Housing and Health Society has pledged support to address housing needs.

## **5.0 NEW BUSINESS**

There were no items.

## **6.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION**

### **Standing Items:**

#### **6.1 New Westminster Police Department (NWPD) – Report**

Constable Tim Callaghan, NWPD, shared the following information:

- Criminal youth offenses have been tapering off since November; however, youth mental health files have increased due to anxiety, mental breaks, etc.;
- The Department’s Mental Health Unit is looking into training members on how to assist those on the autism spectrum;
- Social media influence on youth is non-stop, with many youth striving to become influencers thus creating challenges when they are unable to deal with the results of adult decisions they have made; and,
- Restorative justice would be beneficial at the school level before things escalate to the Police; however, youth must be taught skills such as how to appropriately respond to and disengage from online bullying, etc., and parents play a large role in this type of education.

#### **6.2 Communities Embracing Restorative Action (CERA) – Report**

Gurinder Mann, CERA representative, provided the following report:

- Over the last year the caseload included approximately 50 cases with a number of them coming from New Westminster over the last few weeks of the year;
- The strengthened relationship with the Police Department should see referrals going up from the crown, ICBC, the school districts, etc.;
- It is encouraging to know that New Westminster Police Officers believe that restorative justice in an approach that can be taken;
- CERA will continue facilitating cases virtually and over the phone; however, some clients are reliant on in-person meetings and, if pandemic guideline

compliance can be met, CERA offices will be opened under certain circumstances for these meetings;

- Restorative justice videos are being created for teachers and students in School Districts 40 and 43 to use in classes for conflict resolution, etc. These videos will increase the momentum of restorative justice as well as inform and educate and will be accessible through the CERA website;
- CERA is working towards starting a project in 2021 with the First Nations Court; and,
- Ninety-two percent of clients who participated in the restorative justice process over the last five years did not reoffend, which is a striking difference from the regular system.

### **6.3 New Westminster Victim Assistance Association (NWVAA) – Report**

Bailey Keeler, NWVAA representative, shared the following information:

- The impact of the opioid crisis is being felt by the NWVAA, who are doing more work with less people, and it continues to get worse;
- Support is being provided to a lot of families for the sudden death of loved ones whom they did not know used opioids;
- A domestic violence file went through the restorative justice process and seems to have been successful;
- Overall, the case load has gone up since the beginning of the pandemic, dropping only a little during the summer months;
- The Association has no volunteers currently active due to the pandemic and this is reassessed every two months, and a lot of staff are working from home;
- Court support is still being provided as the courtroom provides enough space for people to move around and maintain physical distance; however, transportation to and from venues is not being provided; and,
- With respect to in-person responses, clients must complete an over the phone questionnaire to determine if an in-person response is appropriate.

### **6.4 School District 40 – Report**

No report was provided.

## **7.0 CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items.

## **8.0 NEXT MEETING DATE**

Tuesday, March 30, 2021

**9.0 ADJOURNMENT**

**ON MOTION**, the meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Certified Correct,

Original Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
**Amanda Semenoff**  
**Alternate Chair**

Original Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
**Carilyn Cook**  
**Committee Clerk**