

Minutes of the Acadia Road Combined Daycare Communicare Society

February 17, 2009 in the Administration Building

In Attendance (in bold; absent members are not in bold)

Infant Centre		3-5 Centers	
Little Goslings	Janice Milnerwood	Acadia:	Margaret Murphy (Co-Secretary)(regrets)
Toddler Centres		Little Raven:	Maria Ezhova (regrets) Marie Mailvaganam
Sitka:		Pacific Spirit	Björn Surborg
Huckleberry:	Todd Handy	Tillicum:	Megan Riter
Canada Goose		Lluvia:	
Discovery	Marcus Hallensleben	Barish:	Maki Ujiie (temporary parent rep)
Lilliput	Julie Bettinger (President) Lisa M Sundstrom (VP Advocacy, Faculty) (regrets)	Summer of '73:	Kristin Loheyde (VP Advocacy, staff) (regrets) Kelli Kadokawa (Fundraising)
Chuva		Kids Club:	Janice Milnerwood Denise Lauritano Jessica Irwin Julie Stitt
New Centres			
Salal		Kittiwake	Jeanne Robert (Co-Secretary)
Staff		Other	Stefanie Ratjen (VP External AMS) Laura Wheeler (Anniversary party sub-committee)
Director	Darcelle Cotton Bev Christian		

Please ask your council rep or senior staff members for contact information if you have any questions.

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1. Introductions

See attendance of council members in bold on first page.

2. Minutes

The update for the 40th anniversary party was changed to read “Entertainment *may* be Bobs and Lolo” from “Entertainment *will* be Bobs and Lolo”.

Minutes: The minutes from the **January 2009** meeting have been approved as amended.

3. Strategies for pre-provincial election advocacy (Darcelle)

The council discussed possible strategies to advocate for childcare services in the upcoming provincial election.

Childcare postcards were mentioned at the last meeting. About 75 postcards were mailed to Gordon Campbell from the childcare administration office. The rest were distributed and hopefully mailed independently. Stefanie distributed some through AMS networks.

Provincial budget was released the day of the council meeting – early indications are that there may be no change to or possibly some cuts to childcare funding. It may take some time to determine the impact of this budget on childcare services.

Stefanie and Lisa are trying to come up with a collective advocacy plan involving campus interest groups. The feeling is that most people acknowledge that childcare is an issue, but there needs to be a coordinated effort to address the problem. They have been looking to meet with the Vancouver school board and other childcare activists to find out how they are refining their election strategies as well.

Council reps need to think about the resources available to support these efforts and the kind of advocacy approach that would be the most effective.

Julie suggested the use of parent daycare stories detailing the trials and tribulations involved in the search for daycare in this area. These stories have already been compiled and could be very strong in a media campaign for example.

Megan suggested that the council ask for support from many parents for large events that are likely to have an impact – and to spread the word beyond the just the UBC community.

There is some suggestion that MLA’s are not hearing about the daycare issues, simply getting the word out to parents to encourage them to contact their MLA’s could be an effective strategy.

Todd suggested that even those with good daycare need to advocate for friends who don’t have daycare or those who will be unable to find after-school care due to shortages. Advocating in our own university departments could be an effective strategy especially if faculty recruitment is a focus (i.e. is it difficult to recruit parents with young children if there is no daycare available).

The council should keep Christina Heidricks in the loop for contacting parents on the waitlist.

Action items: Parent reps please give parents notice that there is an election coming up; let them know that they can contact their MLA and that they will be notified of upcoming chances for involvement.

4. 40th Anniversary Update (Laura)

Laura – things are heating up for the big party! (Saturday July 25th, 2009 3-9pm)

The committee just got approval from classroom services, the RCMP and the fire department to shut down the street. There are still a couple of glitches with the street party as the public transit buses won't be able to get through and insurance issues are yet to be resolved.

Kristen and Laura are gathering contacts for fundraising. Salt spring coffee will supply the coffee for the event.

Megan has been working on live acts, music, costs, staging, bands etc. She will probably book someone in the next month. The band 'otherwise decent old men' is in the running for the booking.

Dina has been helping with publications and advertising. Advertising has already appeared in all of the major UBC publications. The word is getting out and the excitement is building.

Westcadia catering will not donate or give us discounts (their quote for hotdogs and hamburgers was about \$8,000). They did, however, provide some information on how to potentially save some of these costs (renting BBQ's from Salmon for example). It seems to be possible to hire another catering company such as AMS catering services.

An invite list is also being compiled. When it is ready, Laura will circulate it for further suggestions.

The committee really wants the kids at daycare to be involved in the party. They will send a letter to each centre asking for participation suggestions, a mural or a song for example. We also talked about each centre decorating a 'this way' sign to the party.

Open houses are still a possibility but we need to discuss this with staff.

The committee has set up a blog for party communications and suggestions: 40yearsoflov.in.blogspot.com. Although the blog is not up-and-running just yet, we should have links from the council website to the blog and visa versa.

5. Administrators report (Darcelle/Bev)

Darcelle – administrators are still on a roll with hiring. The senior supervisor position beginning in May was just posted.

Acadia will move in March to one of the new buildings. This should be a quick and smooth move over a weekend.

Aucklet, another brand new centre, will open in May. Sitka will move in April and then the new infant centre will open after that. The last new centre will open August 25th after the two-week closure.

The approval process for UNA access to daycare is ongoing.

Bev is currently enrolling Lluvia. KidsClub kindercare deadline is next Monday. There are 27 potential enrollments so far but there will only be 25 spaces available.

Bev will be away the first week of March so if parent reps could check to see if there are any expected withdrawals for April 1st, they should let her know ASAP.

For the first time in many years Bev has advertised spots available for children born in 2005 in the UNA weekly email newsletter and the Acadia Park newsletter. There are currently more spaces for this age group in the new centers than may be filled by students, faculty and staff that will open between now and September.

Darcelle – a question to run by the council: how should childcare services classify post-docs as some post-docs on fellowships are not UBC employees? The current practice is to classify only those that have a UBC employee number as faculty and staff. This is a problem with the way that UBC deals with externally funded post-docs and it will be difficult for the daycare to make exceptions for post-docs in this situation.

Björn suggested that there is still a lot of confusion about the waiting list for parents. Bev replied that the waiting list is not straightforward and that people will get different information depending on their circumstances. If there is confusion, please encourage parents to phone Bev directly. Bev has been working to get current enrollment stats onto the website. This will hopefully be done within a month if she is able to find the time among her many other commitments.

Another general worry from Pacific spirit parents is the loss of staff from old centres to new positions. Darcelle replied that recruiting is difficult, they are always looking for externals and internals to fill all the positions. The older centres will not be forgotten in the shuffle.

Action items: Parent reps please check for any April 1 st withdrawals in your centre.
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6. Website update

We are still celebrating the webmaster, Björn Surborg!

Björn will put a link back to the UBC daycare site from the council website. He will depend on information sent to him to put onto the website – this is now an option!

7. Non-car drop off and pick up logistics

The council brainstormed about ways to reduce the number of parents driving to the daycares. Are there people who live on campus who could reduce driving? 50% of the parents that use UBC daycare live on campus.

There were a number of suggestions to reduce traffic:

A walking bus could be organized to pick up kids around campus for the 3-5s. We could talk to parents about connecting and organizing and use website / carpooling infrastructure to coordinate pickups and dropoffs.

Better stroller parking out of the elements and safe from wildlife may encourage less driving. Bike storage has been discussed previously but the cost for the shelter was prohibitive. A stroller pool, similar to the public bike system, may be a possibility. Inherited, or a few new, umbrella strollers could be made available in a pre-fabricated shed for general usage.

April is earth month – could we do anything to promote this idea in April?

For many parents, time is a serious issue. Extra walking time is tough to fit into an already busy schedule. Transit could shorten walking time, but the community buses are not designed to move across campus between the daycares and the centre of campus west of Westbrook. In addition, it was suggested that some of the community buses won't take strollers.

Stefanie offered to design a transit survey for parents and staff containing questions about routes and access.

Action: Parent reps please email or chat with parents about the utility of a stroller pool.

8. Miscellaneous

Todd pointed out that there is no sidewalk by Summer / Huckleberry. Could we lobby for a sidewalk there? A sidewalk would that make walking easier and, as the council has influenced the addition of speedbumps, we could also advocate for a sidewalk.

Action: Darcelle, Bev and Julie will find a contact to get things started and Todd will help out.

9. Confirm Next Meeting

Every third Tuesday. Next meeting, March 17th, 2009 (St. Patrick's day!) at 7:00pm.