

# Minutes of the Acadia Road Combined Daycare Communicare Society

October 12, 2010 in the Administration Building

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

<b>Infant Centres:</b>			
Little Goslings		Coho	
<b>Toddler Centres:</b>		<b>3-5 Centres:</b>	
Sitka	<b>Katy Thomson</b>	Acadia	
Huckleberry	<b>Marla Mickleborough (VP Advocacy, Students)</b> <b>Maria Zago</b>	Little Raven	<b>Christina Hendricks (VP Advocacy, Faculty)</b> <b>Shi-Ling Hsu (Co-Fundraising Chair)</b> <b>Csilla Tamás</b>
Canada Goose		Pacific Spirit	Jim Johnson (Web Master)
Discovery	<b>Maged Senbel</b> <b>Margherita Zorzetto</b>	Tillicum	<b>Elinor Delgatty (VP Advocacy, Staff)</b>
Lilliput	Julie Stitt	Lluvia	<b>Melissa Johnson</b>
Chuva		Barish	
		Summer of '73	<b>Lisa Sundstrom (Secretary)</b> <b>Todd Handy (Treasurer)</b> <b>Hong Lin</b> <b>Jeannie Scarfe (Co-Fundraising Chair)</b> <b>Kelli Kadokawa (President)</b>
<b>18 months – 5 years Centres:</b>			
Salal		Kittiwake	<b>Yasmin Nassar</b> Musarrat Nahid
Auklet	<b>Qiand (Andrew) Du</b>		
<b>Out-of-School Care (ages 5-12):</b>			
Kids Club	<b>Kelli Kadokawa (President)</b>		
<b>Staff:</b>	<b>Ingrid Keen (Lilliput)</b> <b>Wendy Brundige (Auxiliary Staff)</b>	<b>Others:</b>	Sedi Minachi (GSS)
<b>Directors:</b>	<b>Darcelle Cottons</b> <b>Bev Christian</b>		

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**

Elinor Delgatty moved, Maria Zago seconded accepting the minutes from our last meeting with some corrections to the attendance records. The minutes from the **September 2010** meeting have been approved.

### **3. Administrators' Report (Darcelle)**

Discussion continues with the Developmental Disabilities Association regarding possibility of saving spots for UBC affiliates at DDA-run childcare centres at five locations across the city. Elinor Delgatty raised a question about whether there would ever be spaces available for UBC affiliates since nearly all spots are typically taken by members of institutions where DDA centres located (e.g., Vancouver General Hospital). Darcelle responded that we are negotiating for a few guaranteed spots as DDA centres expand over time. The majority of spots will be in age 3-5 care but one location will offer toddler services.

The next planned new UBC Childcare daycare at the University Services Building (USB) will have 37 spaces for preschoolers and toddlers and will open by September 2011.

The open house at the new Owl at the Barn daycare took place last month with about 60 attendees. Most of those attending do not have children in daycare but were simply interested in what had happened in the facility.

Csilla mentioned that open houses or public consultations on expansions should be announced more widely and effectively. Kelli and Lisa agreed to make an effort to announce such events more prominently and separately from the daycare council meeting minutes in future.

Darcelle is not entirely certain that the new daycares slated to open in the Childcare Administration building will open according to schedule on Jan. 1 due to extent of renovations still needing to take place. Elinor asked if staff could job-share if they are veterans of previous half-day programs. Darcelle said this might be possible depending on what they ask for – any such arrangements cannot be disruptive to the children's wellbeing.

Bev: Enrolment update – just a few offers of daycare spots have been issued for October and this low turnover is expected to continue over the winter as usual. By September our waiting time for 3-5 year old care had dropped significantly with the new spaces opened in 2009 and 2010. All student/staff/faculty families with 4 year olds were offered care by September, all student families with 3 year olds were offered care and staff/faculty families with 3 year olds waited less than one year for care. Several child care organizations in Vancouver had vacant spaces for 3 and 4 year olds in September. Care for children under the age of 3 continues to have long waiting lists of between 18 months to 2.5 years depending on the family status and time of the year.

Action items: Council co-secretaries and president to announce childcare-related events in a timely and prominent manner separate from meeting minutes in future to avoid parents missing events due to the time delay in council minutes being sent out.

#### **4. Advocacy (Christina, Elinor, Katy & Marla)**

Kelli, Christina and Marla met with Graduate Student Society and Alma Mater Society external relations reps last Friday to discuss what kind of response is warranted in reaction to the encroachment of for-profit childcare on campus through a university contract with Kids & Co.

There was discussion of writing a letter to President Stephen Toope and VP Lisa Castle to express concerns, including: no consultation with any constituencies prior to decision, simply an executive decision taken; much research that demonstrates that for-profit childcare is not as high-quality as not-for-profit childcare. The meeting attendees agreed that one important point is for parents to understand the implications and the research available on this. Kids & Co might sound great to parents without much experience in the sector. How to get this message out?

Another concern raised at that meeting is that this may be viewed by UBC as a one-year trial and afterwards cancel membership if it isn't working out, which would leave families without childcare. The childcare would not be a specific UBC-focused daycare but merely reserved access to all existing Kids & Co centres. Kids & Co currently only has one centre in the Lower Mainland (Richmond), but they state they would consider opening a new centre near campus if demand were sufficient. Christina asked Michelle Berner of UBC HR (who is responsible for this area) what would happen if everyone on UBC wait list signed up – how would Kids & Co come up with spaces within 6 months as they guarantee?

Maged: As he understands the situation, one danger is that if the for-profit option appears, there would be migration from UBC daycare to private care, driving up costs for UBC infant and toddler care. Darcelle replied that yes, indeed, this could be a risk given the cross-subsidization that happens through our child care fees.

Ingrid: Quality suffers with for-profit childcare – if offering infant & toddler care, Kids & Co would likely hire one ECE person and the rest of staff would have little or no training (as per minimum standards) and work for minimum wage. UBC always said that it would guarantee offering high quality childcare as a result of its commitment as a learning institution for all stages of life. Ingrid is very passionate about this and always believed in that commitment and now the university is turning its back on this philosophy. After all

the expansion and commitment, to take this step is terrible. To let this happen without any opportunity for people to mobilize against it is a terrible thing. Darcelle has devoted so much attention to advocacy and quality and development of staff, which is a precious thing and Ingrid worries it will all slip away.

Marla: worries that so many parents are desperate for childcare and may see it as good news, so how do we claim to speak for parents? We need to focus our message to parents in advocacy to emphasize that you won't get quality or affordability with this option.

Ingrid wants all the financing to be transparent: how much money is Kids & Co receiving from the university for development on campus in the future, etc? We need all of this information out in the open.

Darcelle: UBC has invested \$17M into the capital costs of building childcare since 1989. The fundamental problem is that the mentality is widespread in our province, indicated by the lack of good public policy. The government views childcare as a user-pay service rather than a government responsibility and a community responsibility like education.

Marla: need to clarify what the university means by its 1000 spot guarantee in the Childcare plan. If Kids & Co spaces count towards this tally, this is a lot more grave than if UBC still commits to providing 1000 spaces provided by UBC childcare.

Wendy: It's our low wages as childcare workers that have subsidized care up to now and we have fought long and hard for every improvement. There is no way to make money as a daycare provider and meet the three predictors of quality, which are shown to be: wages, training, and subsidized space. No one is paying attention to what happened in Australia, when a for-profit childcare corporation took over the entire sector and then wound up costing families and the government far more in the end with a complete degradation of quality.

Ingrid: She began her career in Alberta and former colleagues there have all left the childcare field after so much privatization and degradation of quality has taken place. Worries that people who have been told UBC childcare is gold standard and are recruited to UBC with the promise of excellent childcare, yet through a for-profit provider, the reputation of UBC and UBC childcare will drop precipitously since people don't comprehend the distinctions among all the centres.

Kelli: we don't want the university to become dependent on the for-profit provider and degrade quality.

Todd: If the university were serious about recruitment, it would subsidize housing for faculty, staff, and students as well as childcare. He is not optimistic that they will understand the ethical/ humanitarian argument. Instead, what are some hard-nosed ways we can get at the university's bottom line by minimizing demand for spaces? Any way of pushing unions to deter membership from participating in private childcare? What would be the Faculty Association's perspective? Or are they likely to be in favour of it due to faculty push for the Kids & Co contract?

Marla: We need people to know that there is progress in expanding UBC not-for-profit childcare and to give people basic information about the dangers of for-profit childcare.

Todd: We need info on the website about what options people have and what the pros and cons are.

Maged: Strategically, perhaps we should approach it in a conciliatory way as an option that is sub-optimal and should be minimized and temporary but that should be replaced over time by UBC Childcare spots for all who want them. And kudos to the child care staff for all their fine work.

Christina: So what should we do? Lisa: perhaps Faculty Focus (Faculty Association) newsletter piece and pieces in other employee union newsletters; Ingrid: make a "Fact vs. fiction" very clear argument. Also point out how the university is not meeting childcare plan commitments, which included only not-for-profit childcare.

Action items: Advocacy reps to meet again and come up with concrete advocacy plan.
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## 5. Grant Proposals Revisited

Shi-Ling: he suggested last year that we should reconsider the grant proposals to hone the program so that we're more clear and systematic about it. This requires some time for discussion so we should leave it for next meeting when the agenda is not so full as it is this month.

An aside: Ingrid would like council to pay for signs at both crosswalks near the daycares saying "SLOW DOWN". There have been many instances of reckless drivers nearly hitting kids and adults. Council will consider this idea.

Action items: Kelli: Include an agenda item regarding revision of the grant proposal program for November meeting. Council: Consider Ingrid's traffic calming sign request as a possibility for funding.

## 6. Fall Gift Card Fundraising (Shi-Ling)

Elinor moved and Kelli seconded a motion for Jeannie Scarfe to be elected co-fundraising chair to assist Shi-Ling. The motion was adopted with all in favour. Thank you, Jeannie!

Shi-Ling: We're in the midst of the gift card fundraising period until Oct. 29. He has asked Jim Johnson to put info up on the website about the fundraiser and a link to the order form that parents can download if they have lost their hard copy to order gift cards. Shi-Ling and Jeannie will collate orders at the end of October. We have parents lined up to staff the handout of gift cards at the admin building when the orders have arrived in November.

Action items: Centre reps: Please put a note by the sign-in sheet at your daycares to remind parents to make orders as the Oct. 29 deadline approaches.

## 7. Treasurer's Report (Todd)

As of March 2010 council holds a balance of \$25,392 in liability plus equity; March 2009 comparatively the balance was \$27,054. We spent more than we earned by \$1662 in 2009-2010 due to grants issued and continuing bills being paid from 2009 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary party. Todd has been meaning to visit the bank and consolidate existing accounts into a single chequing account. The council's term deposit account it auto-renewed on March 31 at a very low interest rate, so Todd intends to go to VanCity and see if we can receive a higher interest-earning arrangement. Todd is not sure we need to be sitting on this much money. Perhaps we could put money towards advocacy against the for-profit daycare expansion. Maged agreed. Next month we should have an agenda item on financial goal-setting.

Darcelle: this money has always existed in our accounts and the amount has not changed much over the years.

Elinor: What kind of "rainy day" could happen that we need to save money for?

Todd moved and Maged seconded approval of the treasurer's report.

Action items: Kelli to include agenda item for next month on financial goal-setting for the coming year.

## 8. Executive Position – Co-Secretary

Katy will no longer be a student as of December, so is willing to volunteer as co-secretary. Lisa moved and Christina seconded; The motion was adopted with all in favour. Thank you Katy!

## **9. Parent Info Night**

The event will take place at 7 pm on Thursday, Oct. 14. William Wong will attend on behalf of the Vancouver School Board. Diane and Roland will attend for UBC kindergarten and Kids' Club. Natalia from University Hill Kinderclub will attend re: U Hill kindercare. There will be a parent panel consisting of: Mankee Mah from UNA regarding the sign-up for the children's school bus to U Hill school; Will Welch on the experience of a child entering their catchment school after UBC kindergarten; Mark Crosby on French Immersion and a last-minute scramble for afterschool care. Need two parents to attend about 6:30 to set up chairs and food (three parents volunteered immediately at the meeting).

Kelli suggested buying Starbucks coffee and snacks since won't have access to coffeemaker and dishes at the Acadia Park Commons Block.

Christina moved and Elinor seconded a motion to approve Kelli spending up to \$100 on refreshments for event. The motion was adopted with all in favour.

Action items: Centre reps: Please put a last-minute reminder by the sign-in sheets at your centres regarding this event.
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## **10. Miscellaneous**

Kelli: Fantastic Thunderbird Road shortcut to Osoyoos Place to provide much better access to the daycares from Wesbrook Mall. Thank you to UBC for doing this.

Darcelle: We could write a thank you letter and also ask for traffic calming along Osoyoos!

Wendy: Thanks to all reps for all the work you do on council.

Action items: Kelli to designate a council member to write a letter to UBC Parking.
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## **11. Confirm Next Meeting**

Next meeting Tuesday, Nov. 16 at 7 pm in the Admin. Building. All parents are welcome to attend.