



Parkgate Community Centre, 3625 Banff Court, North Vancouver, BC, V7H 2Z8
Telephone: 604-983-6350 Fax: 604-983-6357

Memo

To: All Community Leaders and Participants
From: Vincent Santacroce, Chair, Seymour Community Services Society
Date: September 27, 2002
Re: Community Governance Forum, September 19, 2002

Thank you for your patience in receiving the information later than we promised. While we received the output from the Consultants on Tuesday September 24th, we wanted to ensure that the material was organized to be as simple as possible in its presentation format without compromising the content.



Fundamental
Principles for Successful
Community Governed
Partnering Agreements

Community Governance forum
September 19, 2002

Hosted by: Seymour Community Services
Society

Facilitated by: Dave Mitchell and Associates

Introduction

FRAMEWORK FOR CHANGE

In the past 4 years there has been tremendous change and development in community governance and the development of community services on the North Shore. New and expanding forms of community governance and community programming have been emerging with the primary example being the innovative partnership agreements for the provision of services that have been entered into between municipalities, their agencies and not-for-profit organizations.

The need for the development of ever expanding ways to provide community services has resulted from a number of different factors both internal to societies and external. Some of those factors are:

Change in the community:

- Larger concentration of people
- Change in the demographics of the community: aging population, working parents
- The public's increased demand for services

Change in the volunteer:

- The volunteer is becoming more sophisticated
- More aware about the expanded possibilities of the services that can be provided and expanded means of obtaining funding
- Larger pool of volunteers, a diverse group, top quality skills, better educated about being a volunteer

Change in government approach:

- Recreation Commission as well as the City and District have entered into partnering agreements on an ad hoc basis with a number of not-for-profit groups
- Sharing of responsibilities is still evolving as the responsibilities and needs of communities and community based organizations become defined, grow and change

Change in legislation:

On the horizon is the **Community Charter**. This document is to provide the principles and the authority for municipal governance. The Charter provides for greater responsibilities for municipalities, limited expanded revenue generation and a greater definition of their powers. The Charter provides the following:

Municipal Purpose includes:

- Providing services, laws and other matters for community benefit
- Fostering the economic, social and environmental well-being of its community

Fundamental Powers include:

- Council may regulate (b) activities in a public place
- It particularly refers to Partnering Agreements between the municipality and others to provide a service on behalf of the municipality (section 21 and def'n)

All of these provide for an environment of change, of innovation, of thinking outside of the box. It is an on-going experiment that is becoming more sophisticated, more demanding and more exciting.

Change and development, however, are not easy. Societies have to consider:

- A variety of interests: municipal, community, societies, financial, personnel, etc.
- Uniqueness of the programs offered by community groups
- Meeting of community needs with quality programming.

The question that has been posed for the governance forum is:

“What are the building blocks that not-for-profit organizations need to engage in partnership activities?”

The present conditions provide for an excellent opportunity to look at the fundamentals required to build a successful, innovative, not-for-profit organization. The question then becomes how do societies address all of these various factors and changing conditions?

Forum Content

As a result of lively discussion from all participants the following areas were specifically identified and brought forward as areas requiring specific consideration when considering community governance partnerships:

- 1. Funding**
- 2. Definition of Services**
- 3. Equal Partnership**
- 4. Community Needs**
- 5. Coordination for Efficiency**
- 6. Relationship – Spirit of Agreement**

The details of these specific areas are identified below:

1. Funding

- Separate capital and operational budget items, and ensure that you identify and give both areas sufficient attention
- Review the requirement for capital assets and identify the cost of obtaining them as well as operating them
- Conduct an operational review including all staffing requirements to assess needs and requirements
- Develop a long term plan for ongoing maintenance and replacement
- Ensure there is control over budget planning in a partnership arrangement
- Recognize budget efficiencies and build upon them
- Understand your short and long term budget philosophy and whether it is your objective to break even, to make a profit
- Identify all available resources within the society, between partners and between societies
- Ensure that funding providers understand and support all funding timelines
- Constantly evaluate all possible funding resources, both governmental and non-governmental
- Understand and communicate the value your society adds to every dollar received
- Share knowledge of funding resources and expertise between societies
- Track and fully report all funds received
- Encourage fresh and creative approaches to obtain funding
- Identify and plan to manage funding opportunities and constraints

2. Definition of Services

- Clarify which services you expect to receive from your partner, and those you will provide to the Partner, to the members of the Society and to the community
- Require and obtain a clear definition of who does what and when between the Society and its Partner
- Define all required resources
- Identify the areas of core competency both within the Society and between Partners
- Understand the real requirements of the community, the Society and your Partner
- Constantly review your needs
- Understand your facility and its capabilities in considering possible services
- Define the service being provided to the community by the Society
- Fully describe and identify all programs and services
- Evaluate the effectiveness of hosting a program for another society or group
- Consider sharing administrative or other services between Partners and Societies

3. Equal Partnership

- Identify precisely the responsibilities of the Society and of its Partner
- Clarify which matters are managed separately and those which are done together
- Develop a flexible mechanism for addressing new issues
- Define a process to recognize and manage disputes which may arise
- Understand the capabilities of the Society and its Partner individually, as well as together
- Accept that change will occur and develop methods to recognize change and address it
- Ensure that volunteers understand the partnership agreement and the their personal accountabilities
- Agree on who has the responsibility for decisions regarding budget, services and staff
- Make sure that all the contributions of both partners are identified and credited
- Regularly examine, review and augment the partnership
- Identify the threshold level of control that is required by each of the partners to ensure viability
- Describe clearly how the partnership will function in terms of managing the building, facilities, programming and funding
- Share responsibility for success

4. Community Needs

- Identify which community your Society is providing service for
- Consider innovative ways to empower the community
- Develop a dialogue with your community to identify their needs
- Ensure that your services are accessible
- Embrace new ideas
- Keep the community involved in the planning and feedback processes
- Communicate with other service providers to coordinate your efforts and identify overlaps, or gaps in services being provided
- Listen carefully when the community expresses opinions about your service or what else is needed
- Create a formalized complaint and suggestion mechanism that is simple and available
- Demonstrate flexibility in your approach
- Maintain a sense of fun

5. Coordination for Efficiency

- Dialogue regularly with Societies, Partners, Stakeholders and Funders to identify efficiencies
- Consider joint facilitations or the formation of “umbrella groups” with other Societies to maximize your effort
- Share your successes and your failures as each of these may help others
- Investigate and identify which programs are better provided on a shared based with others
- Ensure the highest possible level of communication at the Board level
- Analyze your organization for flexibility

6. Relationship – Spirit of the Agreement

- Commit to a relationship that is guided by equal and mutual respect
- Consider the actions you are undertaking to ensure they satisfy the spirit of the agreement
- Establish a climate where communication is ongoing and complete
- Define and respect lines of authority
- Ensure that volunteers understand the partnership and each party’s role within it
- Ask direct questions, and avoid making assumptions
- Cultivate a sense of team work and cooperation between the partners
- Foster an atmosphere of trust within the partnership
- Be guided by the limits to what you can achieve within the partnership agreement
- Follow through on your commitments
- Strive to achieve the best services possible in a way that complements the partnership

Consensus

It was the consensus of all participants that this was a ground breaking and successful event:

- Community Leaders across the North Shore met and sat around the table together;
- There was engaging and rewarding discussion regarding community partnership;
- Strong inroads were made in regard to what everyone felt was the beginning of further discussion on this emerging issue of Community Governance.

Summary

Fundamental Principles of Community Governance 'Six Fundamental Principles/Building Blocks'

The Consultants were asked to summarize key themes in a simple succinct statement, which are the basic 'Building Blocks' to encourage future discussion and give a symbolic representation of our efforts.

'Creating'

Spirit of the Agreement: A fundamental understanding of the essence of the relationship is required between Partners as well as within the Society
Equal Partnership: Each party to a partnership agreement must demonstrate commitment to the project
Balanced Governance Model: The governance model must strike a balance between the Society and the Partner
Definition of Services: There must be a definition of the services to be provided to the Partners and to the Community



'Organizing'

Organization and Management Structures: Organization and management structures within the Society and between the Partners need to be coordinated and efficient
Focus on Core Competency: A focus on core competencies is important, both within the Society, and between the Partners
Funding: Funding solutions need to address both capital and operating budgets

Accountability: Lines of accountability within the Society and within the partnership must be clear
Identification of Roles: Roles within the partnership must be understood
Limits on Risk: Risks must be understood and managed in the best interests of each party in a partnership agreement



'Identifying'

Community Needs: The needs of the Community may change and it is important too regularly re-evaluate programs for relevance

Coordination for Efficiency: Coordination of responsibilities within the partnership will increase efficiency and this could also be expanded to coordinate efforts between Societies to identify and address any gaps in service, or overlaps
Service Areas: There must be clarity as to the geographical area and the service areas to be addressed by the Society

Skills and Abilities: An accurate and comprehensive inventory of the 'skills, tools and abilities' of the Society and Partner will optimize the relationship

Note: This process was designed to create open and ongoing process and welcomes further participants.

Participants

The Seymour Community Services Society would like to thank the following participants and organizations for their input and for attending the Community Governance meeting:

Capilano Community Services Society

Susan Brennan, Director
Jill Blair, Director
Sue Bradshaw, Director
Robyn Nemeth-Gunn, Director
Doug Margerm, Director
Murray Superle, Director
Robin Woods, Director
Linda McGinn, Executive Director

City of North Vancouver

Councillor Darrell Mussato

City of North Vancouver Staff

Larry Orr, Social Planner

District of North Vancouver Council

Mayor Don Bell
Councillor Ernie Crist
Councillor Doug Mackay-Dunn

District of North Vancouver Staff

Mark Bostwick, Planner
Phillip Chapman, Planner

Lynn Valley Community Association

Don Friesen, Director
Fred Sekora, Director
Bob McCormack, Director

Lynn timer & Inter River Community Association

John Fair, Director
Barbara MacLellan, Director

North Shore Neighbourhood House

Steve Flett , Director
Ken Kissock , Direct
Stephanie Samaridis, Director
Don Rutherford, Executive Director
Tricia Andrews, Staff
Crystal Saunders, Staff
Lisa Dowding-Carter, Staff

North Vancouver Recreation Commission

Sandy Fleming, Director
Doug Worbets, Staff
Tom Walker, Staff
Joyce Parkin, Staff
Bernie Duffy, Staff
Linette Smith, Staff

North Vancouver Tennis Society

Roger Nickel, Chairman and President
Doug Martin, Director

Silver Harbour Centre Society

Glenn Mckenzie, 2nd President

Seymour Community Services Society

Vincent Santacroce, Chairperson
Allan Lam, Treasurer
Wayne Hunter, Director
Jan Argent, Director
Anne Mooi, Executive Director
Louise Schopp, Staff