



BOARDS ONBOARD

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We Want You To Join Board Voice

Yes it sounds repetitive, but we need to keep asking. If you haven't already, we want you to join Board Voice. These days, when money is tight and EDs and boards are combing through their budgets to find every efficiency possible, we believe that Board Voice continues to be an organization worth supporting and trust that you do too.

In some ways, joining Board Voice is an act of faith. Can we create a resilient vessel through which governors of our community agencies can influence public policy and contribute to our communities and the people we serve in new ways? We think so. In our short history we have found new ways for boards to work together and a willingness on the part of politicians to listen to our ideas and concerns.

Board Voice is an organization of boards and board governors. It runs on a very small budget, under \$75,000 for operations, with part time staff only. Most of the organization's income is derived from member fees and grants, such as the \$25,000 grant for the Community Boards in Action project from the Vancouver Foundation.

We need to continue to grow to create a stronger and more influential citizen voice for community services in the province. The more boards join, the greater capacity we have to consider issues locally through inter-board work and the greater our clout with politicians. Additional funds from new memberships will also help us to maintain adequate support to our members and the Board Voice board.

We believe that there will continue to be pressure on community services as governments try to deal with deficits and the insatiable demands of the health industry. We need to bring all of our assets to the table to grow the kind of supports we believe are essential to our communities' health. And some of our greatest assets sit around agency board tables across the province.

So think about joining Board Voice this year. And come to the conference in November to get inspired!



Conference 2012 – You'll want to be there!

The Board Voice conference and AGM has been an annual highlight for many board members from across the province and we fully expect that this year will be no different. The conference will be held in Richmond on **November 23rd and 24th 2012**

Great speakers, interesting and substantive workshops and important conversations will frame this important gathering of board governors and executive directors. **Al Etmanski**, founder of PLAN and the co-chair of the Advisory Committee on Social Innovation will speak on the topic: *Is There Truth in Advocacy?*, followed by **Seth Klein**, B.C. Director of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives speaking about taxes. **Carol James**, MLA, MSD Critic for the NDP will weigh in on her take about the current state of affairs in the province from the NDP point of view.

Friday afternoon will feature six high-energy workshops for the participants to choose from. (See below) On Friday evening conference goers can relax at an open bar followed by a conference banquet with speaker **Gordon Hogg**, MLA, currently the Parliamentary Secretary for Non-profit Partnerships. As Parliamentary Secretary for Social Entrepreneurship, Gord was responsible for the Advisory Council on Social Innovation which completed its work earlier this year.

Saturday will feature the AGM, a presentation on effective advocacy with a panel of **Paul Lacerte**, Executive Director of the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, **Dawn Hemingway**, Director of the School of Social Work at UNBC and **Adrienne Montani**, Executive Director of First Call. **Tim Beachy** and **Tim Agg** Executive director of PLEA will share information on the Roundtable of Provincial Social Services Organizations and finally, there will be opportunities to provide input into the ongoing development of Board Voice. See details on inside pages. And register!

WORKSHOPS	WORKSHOPS	WORKSHOPS
<p>The What & Why of Social Enterprise with David Lepage, Manager, Enterprising Non Profits</p> <p>Social enterprise is another tool to support the success and sustainability of non---profits. Social enterprises can enhance delivery on mission and programs, respond to increased local community needs, diversify revenue sources, or improve self---sustainability options. This workshop will explore what they are, how they work and why they may provide value to your organization.</p> <p>Fundraising Essentials for Boards of Directors with Judy Lightwater of CEO of Fund Development Services</p> <p>Judy Lightwater believes that individual giving is the largest untapped pool of Canadian charitable dollars. She wants you to ask the concerned public to invest in their communities... and she will show you how.</p> <p>Communities Under Pressure – New solutions for Non Profit Agencies with Dr. Greg Halseth and Marleen Morris</p> <p>Non---profits in rural and small town communities in BC are experiencing tremendous challenges related to increased need and expectations and</p>	<p>decreased resources. This workshop will explore the root causes of the changes and pressures communities are experiencing, new models for service provision, and opportunities for and approaches to collaboration and partnerships. It will also examine the central role that collaborative service planning and board and staff training can play in building resiliency and sustainability in the local non---profit sector.</p> <p>Hiring a new Executive Director – Before, During and After – Terry Clark</p> <p>Hiring the 'right' Executive Director is a must in today's economy. Evaluating their performance can be difficult and what are you going to do if you have the 'wrong' Executive Director on staff? This workshop will provide valuable information and assist in this crucial Board Director role, which is considered by many as one of the most important functions that a Director performs. The workshop will be interactive and entertaining.</p> <p>Authentic Leadership in Action – Taking Leadership into Organizations and Communities – Jennifer Charlesworth</p>	<p>In this session, participants will explore the leadership crossroads in our organizations and communities and consider ways in which board governors can be leaders, transformational hosts and change agents. Leadership is a participatory act and you will leave this session with a few more ideas, tools and experiences about authentic participatory leadership and how to engage more deeply and effectively with others so that the strengths, gifts and talents of many (including yourself) are mobilized for action.</p> <p>So You're Thinking of Starting A Co---op? Bob Williams and Elvy Del Bianco</p> <p>John Restakis presented a well reviewed workshop last year, looking at the role that the social economy and co---ops play in meeting the need for reform and addressing the challenges facing social care in the future. The focus this year will move towards the practical application of this model. How do you get something like this going? Who needs to be involved? Where do you start? What are the pitfalls and what are the pay---offs? Join this exciting workshop.</p>

Meet the Board Voice Board of Directors for 2012



Dave Stigant, Chair
Penticton and District
Community Services



Carol Matusicky, Vice Chair
Burnaby Family Life



Craig East, Treasurer
Options Community Services
Society - Surrey



Alyson Hagen-Johnson,
Secretary – N. Island
Community Services Society



Tina Marten
The Bridge, Kelowna



Terry Moist
John Howard society
of the N. Island



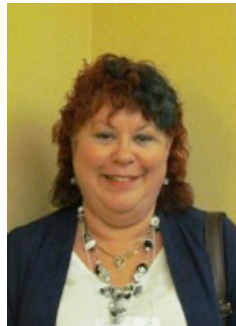
Dawn Hemingway
Intersect Youth and
Family Services – P. G.



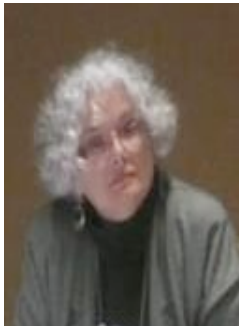
Lynn Carter
Greater Vancouver
Community Services Society



Ron Birch
N. Okanagan Youth
and Family Services -
Vernon



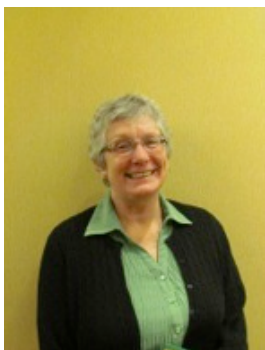
Lyn Policha
Options community
Services - Surrey



Judy Hayes
PLEA Community
Services Society



Brian DeMuy
Family services of
Greater Vancouver



Leslie Welin
Clements Centre, Duncan



Gloria Lifton
Sunshine Coast Community Services Society

Our great thanks to the
Board of Directors for all
their efforts at keeping the
flame alive.

Editorial – The Opinions expressed here.... from Board Chair Dave Stigant

Board Chair Dave Stigant is long enough in the tooth to remember that the Chinese characters for change are in fact the characters for “opportunity” and “risk”. The next year will, without doubt, present both opportunity and risk for *Board Voice*. What are some of the indicators that all will not remain the same?

On a federal front, our Conservative government is moving Canada closer to the levels of restraint imposed in the European Union to avoid EU economic chaos. It would take an observer wiser than me to tell you whether Canadian fiscal/social moves are necessary, or whether they're adopted by the current government for other reasons. I do not, however, see any government support for a broad-based discussion to explore that budget issue, or to explore the social-economic alternatives arising from such think tanks as *Imagine Canada* or *Social Innovation Generation* (generation refers to creation, not an age group).

In B.C., *GNPI* has failed to address the issue of sustainability in the social sector and, while our presentation may have widened the conversation beyond “social entrepreneurship” (BC Advisory Committee on Social Entrepreneurship), the whole topic seems to have dropped from the radar. Perhaps we as a society are not hurting enough to demand that conversation.

In B.C. we have an acknowledged “free

enterprise coalition” government that—for any one of a number of reasons—is predicted to lose the public confidence at the polls on May 14, 2013. Enshrining the election date in legislation may have been the most foolhardy move ever made by a BC politician since Phlying Phil set speed records on our highways. Talk about an immovable object!

Although B.C. polls are often more unreliable than Alberta polls as election predictors, look what happened to Wildrose and Premier Redford, the one the loser and the other the upset winner. BC has the reputation as the heart of ‘wild west’ Canadian politics, where right wing governments have brought in progressive ideas (think who unionized education), and left-leaning governments have been moved to make surprisingly conservative moves.

Suffice to say that over the next 8 months we'll see ample evidence of the political reality: campaign from the extreme and govern from the middle. I suspect that due to economic realities, the left will be very much in the middle, despite more ambitious (and justified) pent up demands for left-leaning changes.

With the perfect collision of economic hope (based in petroleum resources and exporting) and the alienation of the north, aboriginal rights, environmental issues, related disasters elsewhere, the best revenue hope for government of any stripe is a hard sell to many (or most) in the province. Absent a mandate to

raise tax revenues, things do not look bright.

What does this have to do with *Board Voice*? This has a lot to do with OUR constituency: the community-based, not-for-profit social services. They continue to go through strangulation by millimeters (something like death by a thousand cuts): Programs cut entirely; Funded programs without the ability to deal with the inflationary squeeze; Organizational capacities used by government but not sustained by government; Diminishing community volunteerism; A widespread loss of confidence that individuals and locals can make a difference through being heard.

In fact, the NDP ‘government in waiting’ may have no more mandate or appetite to further support social services than the current government, which has done some good works such as the Downtown Eastside housing initiatives.

In my view, *Board Voice* has the potential to foster a local, grass-roots political voice. Ironically, I believe we can do that, not primarily by becoming a strong provincial voice, but rather by using activities like our conference, the Boards in Action initiative and our slow quest for membership, to facilitate local, relevant and provincially coordinated political advocacy for social services. (I do sometimes wonder if our tent is too small.)

I stand in awe of the local work of both our members, and our constituency. We have much to appreciate, much to support, much to learn from—and I place the groups involved in the first wave of **Boards in Action** as positive exemplars of this fledgling movement. I also stand in awe of your *Board Voice* board members, who continue to support their local initiatives AND *Board Voice*, not ‘tirelessly’ as I am sure they tire, but with continued staying power, real effort and contribution.

I believe that *Board Voice* should and must explore means of moderating that workload on individuals by finding new means to employ ‘many hands’. And those hands need to be volunteer hands, as our expectations are too great to be sustainable via our staff and not affordable to purchase. Even our few funders support projects over support of core BV capacity.

So, please consider 3 requests: #1 Please send a delegate or two to the *Board Voice* conference, so they can pick up innovative ideas to help your society board and contribute to the common wealth of local commitment and ideas to support our vulnerable neighbours; #2 please have your society join *Board Voice*—the cost is small and the pay-back in provincial voice large; and #3 please invite a neighbor board to join you at our conference.

Here's lookin' at you on November 23!

Op-ed from the Roundtable of Provincial Social Services Organizations

Seniors' Day is No Substitute for Real Support

By: David Hay

Seniors aren't problems to be managed, and aging is not an illness. But too often we talk about older British Columbians that way, in terms both inaccurate and demeaning.

There are certainly challenges in growing older. But nothing happens at 65 that suddenly makes someone less of a person.

Seniors contribute a great deal. Like everyone else, they work, volunteer, support family members, nurture friendships, pursue hobbies and interests, and participate in community life. In B.C., more than 10,000 children are being raised by their grandparents with not a lot of support - a great challenge and contribution.

Yes, many British Columbians require society's support as they age. But so do people of all ages - families needing day care, university students needing bursaries, commuters needing good roads and everyone needing health care.

Yet, somehow, support for

seniors tends to be viewed as a special burden.

Admittedly, demographics create some challenges. In 2001, there were 135,000 British Columbians over 80. By 2011, there were 197,000, a 46 per cent increase in 10 years. Similar increases lie ahead; by 2036, one in four of us will be over 65.

While we talk about supporting people as they age, we aren't delivering. The B.C. Ombudsperson reported last year that the number of publicly subsidized residential care beds increased by 3.4 per cent between 2002 and 2010. Meanwhile, the population over 80 - the main client base - increased by 34 per cent. (Home support services also failed to keep up with the growth in the over-80 population.)

Those of us in the community services sector know it is a mistake to think seniors' needs revolve around health care, as if aging is an illness.

Families do great work helping their elders. But not everyone has family members nearby, and often, professional skills are required.

That's when the agencies that

employ thousands of expert, dedicated people in the community social services sector take over. They support seniors in their homes. They help with shopping and meals. They provide physiotherapy, and counselling on everything from medications and health to emotional issues.

Our work produces pragmatic benefits. For example, while it costs \$72,000 a year to provide residential care (shared between seniors and government), a few hours a week of home support can help people stay independent at a fraction of that expense. Community support is the best way to reduce demands on the health care system.

But really, this is about doing what's right. Seniors should be supported in their desire to live full, rich lives, and contribute.

Our commitment also has to extend to the professional, dedicated people who provide the support. The number of seniors has been increasing, but government

support has not kept up. Frontline workers have been increasingly stressed and stretched, and seniors have suffered from reduced care.

It's good that we recognize our elders through National Seniors Day, Oct. 1.

But seniors don't really need a day, or a press release.

They need a citizenry and a government that treat them as valued people, not problems. When that happens, every day will be seniors' day. And we will be a stronger society.

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David Hay, PhD is the Executive Director of the Federation of Community Social Services and is writing on behalf of the Roundtable of Provincial Social Services

Note: This Op-ed was printed in more than 10 different community newspapers across the province.

Community Boards in Action – Lift-off

“Citizens, in their capacity to come together and choose to be accountable, are our best shot at making a difference.”

**Peter Block in
Community—the
Structure of Belonging**

Recently, Board Voice received a two-year grant through the Vancouver Foundation, to enhance the local inter-board community development process that we’ve been nurturing over the past few years.

To this end, the board has identified five front-runner communities, (those which have already been meeting and planning together for some time), to receive seed funding to develop a collaborative interagency projects. The five communities are Victoria, Kelowna, Prince George, the Sunshine Coast and the Cowichan Valley.

In each case, a lead Board Voice member and agency will coordinate the local planning process and submit a short proposal to Board Voice about what they want to accomplish together.

The projects have to fit into one or more of four key categories: interagency

collaboration; improved governance; enhanced community networking; or enhanced understanding of social services in the community.

Proposals are due in to Board Voice in November and most projects will get underway in the New Year.

Next year, five additional communities will be identified and will be funded to undertake community projects. Several communities have already indicated their desire to become a part of this and will likely be pulling board members together over the course of this year to be ready for the next call for proposals.

Our hope is that Board Voice will attract new funding for this community process, so that we can extend and broaden this approach. We further hope that these projects will stimulate new thinking and increased resilience in B.C. communities.

Roundtable of Provincial Social Services Organizations – Developing Communications Strategies for the Coming Election

The Roundtable of Provincial Social Service Organizations is a loose affiliation of major umbrella organizations such as BCACL, United Community Services Co-op, the B.C. Society of Transition Houses and the Federation of Community social Services. There are more than 50 different provincial organizations representing one element of other of the social services sector from cradle to grave.

Board Voice is a member of this group and is engaged in a communications leadership group to highlight the voice of the community social services sector in B.C. prior to the next provincial election.

Our hope is that all of the organizations and agencies in the province begin to use similar language in explaining the sector to the public and in speaking to government. Sometime in the next month, most agencies will receive a communications package with

ideas for public speeches and meetings with local politicians. Closer to the election, further material will be provided.

In addition to this, videos about the sector will be developed, with a view to a You Tube campaign. There will be much more about this communicated through all of these provincial organizations to their memberships, so stay tuned.

Board Voice will be on top of this as Carol Matusicky, our Vice Chair is also the vice chair for the Roundtable Leadership Group and Doug Hayman will be coordinating their activities over the next six months.

It’s time for this sector to pull together.

The coming election could be very important for this sector and we need to make our concerns and aspirations know to all parties.

We’re On the Web at

www.boardvoice.ca

and on Twitter at

@boardvoicebc

Op-ed From the Roundtable of Provincial Social Services Organizations

It's Tough to Start Kindergarten Already Behind

By Dr. Carol Matusicky

It's tough to show up on the first day of kindergarten, keen, hopeful, nervous, and then realize that you're already behind.

Yet that's reality for almost 30 per cent of children heading to kindergarten in this province.

It's not fair. In fact, it's cruel.

And it's wasteful. All our children should have a chance to succeed - for their sakes, and for the province's future.

In the community services sector, local organizations work every day to strengthen families and ensure every child arrives in kindergarten ready to learn. We work with families on parenting skills, help with job searches and provide children with the supports they need to overcome challenges.

It hasn't been enough. We're stretched, communities are stretched and children are paying the price.

The provincial government deserves credit for recognizing the problem. In 2003, it launched the 'Success by Six'

program.

In 2009, the government made a bolder commitment. The '15 by 15' initiative set a goal of having only 15 per cent of children starting kindergarten not ready to learn by 2015.

That would be a tremendous achievement. But the efforts have fallen far short.

The University of British Columbia's Human Early Learning Partnership tracks school readiness across the province. In 2006, it reported 29.6 per cent of children were entering school not ready to learn.

Last year, it reported 30.9 per cent of children arrived in kindergarten not ready to learn. Despite the efforts, and welcome innovations like Strong Start Centres, the situation worsened.

Children aren't ready to succeed in school for many reasons - emotional immaturity, lack of language skills, poor social adjustment or physical problems.

But the UBC research found that with appropriate help, the percentage of children not ready to learn could be cut from 30 per cent to 10 per

cent.

And while poverty is a factor, researchers discovered most vulnerable children are middle class. All children and families need access to services and support.

Our sector provides that help. Our organizations and agencies work with families in need. We help them find jobs, be the best parents possible. When families face bigger problems - emotional, or addiction or lost housing - we help with the crisis, and provide the skills to avoid future problems.

Take one example. Burnaby Family Life Association offers educational and support programs for parents of preschoolers. They share and learn about their children's health and development, and grow stronger together. There are programs for families new to Canada, or facing financial problems.

We need support to let us do more.

That makes economic sense. When children start school behind, they often

never catch up. The Human Early Learning Partnership estimates reducing the percentage of children not ready to learn to 10 per cent would boost BC's economy by 20 per cent over the next 60 years.

It's also a question of the kind of province we want. When a five-year-old girl shows up for her first day of kindergarten, it should be exciting. She shouldn't face the harsh realization that, through no fault of her own, she is already behind the other children, with no idea how to catch up.

Our sector wants to change that. We believe all British Columbians feel the same way.

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Dr. Carol Matusicky is the Vice Chair of the Board Voice Society and is writing on behalf of the Roundtable of Provincial Social Service Organizations.

Note: This Op-ed was printed in the Victoria Times Colonist and several community newspapers

Letter to the Editor Regarding the Healthcare Benefits Trust

Printed in the Victoria Times Colonist on October 12, 2012

Re: Agencies Shouldn't Have to Pay...Lindsay Kines

Let's get this straight.... the government decides to set up their own benefits plan and force community agencies into it. Then they allow the plan to accrue an unfunded liability of millions of dollars. Then they want to force the agencies to pay back the unfunded liability (in some cases hundreds of thousands of dollars). If an agency wants to leave the plan, they have to pay back all monies owed on this unfunded liability (even if they never had a claim), but they can only leave if they can prove they can find a cheaper plan. AND, if they don't pay up, they will be sued.

Think of this, dozens of agencies funded by the government, being sued by a quasi government agency for money that takes care of persons with disabilities, children and families. Where, might I ask, are these agencies, already stretched from years of underfunding, going to find the money to pay back unfunded liabilities and lawyer's fees?

A number of agencies were able to escape this plan some years ago and sign up with other approved plans. They receive much better service and these are funded plans. (There won't be unfunded liabilities. Ever.) HBT is apparently suggesting that "the agencies allowed a large number of claims to be filed." Agencies don't manage claims, that's HBT's job and how this was done led directly to the unfunded liability. So who needs to own this?

Somebody needs to get a grip on reality here. This problem was not of the agencies' making. There are better alternatives. Robbing the poor to pay off the results of ineffective management by others is not a solution!

Dave Stigant
Chair, Board Voice Society of B.C.

Hope to see you at the conference! Sign up here.

<http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e6e8pl37b9a8a2de&llr=iyihr7dab> or on the website at www.boardvoice.ca



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