

# MINUTES OF THE ACADIA ROAD COMBINED DAYCARE COMMUNICARE SOCIETY

MAY 17TH, 2011  
Administration Building – 2881 Acadia Road

**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	Katy Thomson (Co-Secretary) Shi-Ling Hsu (Fundraising Chair) (regrets)	ACADIA	
HUCKLEBERRY	<b>Marla Mickleborough (VP Advocacy, Students)</b>	LITTLE RAVEN	<b>Christina Hendricks (VP Advocacy, Faculty)</b> Csilla Tamás
CANADA GOOSE		PACIFIC SPIRIT	
DISCOVERY	<b>Maged Senbel</b> Harjoat Bhamra	TILLICUM	Elinor Delgatty (VP Advocacy, Staff) (regrets)
LILLIPUT	<b>Julie Stitt</b>	LLUVIA	<b>Melissa Johnson</b>
CHUVA	Miriam Pai-Spering	BARISH	
		SUMMER OF '73	<b>Lisa Sundstrom (Co-Secretary)</b> <b>Todd Handy (Treasurer)</b> Hong Lin <b>Jeannie Scarfe (Co-Fundraising Chair)</b>
<b>18 MONTHS – 5 YEARS CENTRES:</b>			
SALAL		KITTIWAKE	<b>Yasmin Nassar</b> Musarrat Nahid
AUKLET	<b>Jen Lamont</b>	OWL	<b>Andrea Walus</b>
PIOGGIA	Feng Liu	SANDPIPER	Ee-Seul Yoon Louise Mol <b>Nancy Meagher</b>
<b>OUT-OF-SCHOOL CARE (AGES 5-12):</b>			
KIDS' CLUB	<b>Kelli Kadokawa (President)</b>		
STAFF:		OTHERS:	
DIRECTORS:	<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.

## **MEETING AGENDA:**

1. Introductions
2. Review of the Minutes (April 2011 meeting)
3. Administrators' Report
4. Advocacy: Kids & Co
5. Fundraising/ Financial Goal Setting
6. Parking
7. Next Year's Executive
8. Miscellaneous
9. Confirm next meeting

## **MEETING CONTENT:**

### **1. INTRODUCTIONS**

See attendance of council members in bold on first page.

### **2. REVIEW OF THE MINUTES (APRIL 19, 2011)**

Maged moved, Jen seconded, thus accepting the minutes from our last meeting with 4 minor revisions. The minutes from the 2011/04/19 meeting have been approved.

### **3. ADMINISTRATORS' REPORT (DARCELLE AND BEV)**

DARCELLE: A short report today. We are still in bargaining for a new staff contract with no resolution yet.

With regard to the campus childcare plan, we are in discussion with the university about what childcare will look like as it expands into the future. It is becoming clearer that childcare within the academic core of campus will be run by UBC Childcare Services (CCS). Child care in other on campus neighbourhoods and rental buildings are to be tendered to a "not for profit contractor" through the UNA. Operations in the schools including afterschool care will be up to the Vancouver School Board, and currently school board policy states it is not-for profit.

BEV: About 60 families going to kindergarten have not yet submitted their withdrawal forms indicating the date when they will be vacating their childcare spot. It is extremely helpful for me to have this information as early as possible in order to issue offers to new families with as much notice as possible.

I have encountered three families this month who informed me that they are sending their child to Kids & Company rather than UBC when I have called to issue childcare offers. Through talking to those parents, I have found out that Kids & Co is charging \$625/month for two-day a week part-time toddler care vs the UBC CCS rate of \$463 for the same care. Our 3-day a week part-time care is only \$493, so in fact parents pay more at Kids & Co for fewer days of care. Kids & Co has a 2-month withdrawal notice timeline, while we at UBC CCS have a one-month withdrawal policy. This means that Kids & Co can offer spots to parents two months in advance of starting, while we typically only offer with one month of notice – thus Kids & Co beats us to clients.

JULIE: Is it time to consider a 2-month withdrawal notice timeline rather than UBC's 1-month notice?

BEV: We have quite a few families who give less than 1 month notice and end up having to pay fees so are worried about a 2-month withdrawal policy creating significant hardship for families.

MARLA: I have heard from an acquaintance that one of the problems w/ Kids & Co in Calgary was that they would guarantee spots within a certain time period, but not necessarily at a particular location in the area. So parents might have to travel a long way to their child's daycare centre.

JEANNIE: I was talking to a parent looking at a spot with Kids & Co in Vancouver and it was \$1400/month for a 3-5 year old spot vs. \$800 here at UBC.

MARLA: I also saw a job posting for the centre offering only a little over \$12/hour as staff wages.

NANCY: Is there a danger of Kids & Co being real competition and taking away needed clientele from UBC?

BEV: There is a danger as the September season comes upon us if Kids & Co can offer spots more quickly than we can. So all the more important that parents give as much withdrawal notice as possible.

BEV: One of the parents I called to offer a daycare space was under the impression that Kids & Co was a UBC-sponsored daycare. I had to correct her that the arrangement with UBC just guarantees spaces but doesn't endorse the quality of care and provides no university oversight. It made me wonder how Kids & Co is presenting its relationship to UBC with potential clients.

MELISSA: What is our website information on this? Could we somehow signal that Kids & Co is not operated or endorsed by UBC?

NANCY: Part of the problem might be clarity and availability of information. I heard how great UBC childcare was when we arrived but it was very difficult to find information in detail about what the centres are like.

**ACTION ITEMS:** Darcelle and Bev to consider how different childcare options could be presented on the UBC CCS website to clear up any misunderstandings.

#### 4. ADVOCACY

CHRISTINA: I sent an email to Lisa Castle (Associate VP, Human Resources) about a month ago asking for us to be involved in the decisionmaking on whether or not UBC should renew the contract with Kids & Co – never received a response.

MARLA: Do we know what their criteria are for renewing or canceling the contract?

DARCELLE: What would happen with UBC-affiliated people enrolled at Kids & Co if the contract were canceled?

CHRISTINA: We don't really know the answers to these questions. There was a flattering article re: Kids & Co's corporate affiliations in the Vancouver Sun on May 1, which specifically referred to the partnership with UBC. Should we reply? I began to think it might sound like sour grapes from UBC Childcare.

DARCELLE: Sharon Gregson (from the Coalition of Childcare Advocates of BC) wrote a letter to the editor in the Saturday edition of the Sun responding to article and pointing out differences between nonprofit and for-profit childcare quality.

KELLI: It might be worthwhile at this point to write again to Lisa Castle and suggest to her that we'd like to offer input on the Kids & Co contract given that the arrangement is receiving some publicity linking UBC to Kids & Co.

NANCY: What is the issue with Kids & Co? I am new to council meetings so I don't know the issue.

MARLA: The issue is that there is a lot of evidence that indicates for-profit childcare is not of good quality for children, so we believe UBC should not be endorsing for-profit childcare or seeing it as a solution for the university community.

CHRISTINA: I thought maybe we should point out to UBC that this kind of endorsement and publicity may not serve the university well given what we know about how the care will likely turn out.

JULIE: Another point is the problem of public university money going to a profit-making company when it could be done more affordably and sustainably with not-for-profit management. UBC CCS can't make it financially if for-profit entities are siphoning off clientele in the 3-5 aged care category, which is the only financially profitable category of childcare. It affects the capacity of UBC CCS to offer under-3 aged childcare.

MAGED: There should be strong language in any UBC agreement with Kids & Co that as enrolment pressure at CCS declines, the agreement with Kids & Co is canceled.

DARCELLE: I suspect that people will move back here as they are offered spaces at UBC CCS since people know it's better quality and it is more affordable. But families will be dinged with withdrawal fees along the way due to Kids & Co's 2-month withdrawal requirement and our ability to offer spaces typically only with one month's notice.

BEV: I expect this will not affect UBC's survival in the long term but instead stand-alone daycares whose clientele will be absorbed by Kids & Co and they will collapse. One question that occurred to me is who's tracking whether Kids & Co is fulfilling its 6-month promise and living up to its contract with the university? How can UBC track this?

DARCELLE: Maybe one advocacy strategy could be to give UBC a list of questions that they should be asking in the process of deciding whether or not to renew the Kids & Co contract.

LISA: We should perhaps have a list of questions on the UBC CCS or Parent Council website concerning what parents should potential childcare providers when considering their offers.

**ACTION ITEMS:** Advocacy reps to draft a list of questions for UBC (to Lisa Castle) on what the university should consider before renewing its contract with Kids & Co. Stemming from this, advocacy reps with Darcelle & Bev should take from the list for a list of questions to put on UBC CCS website.

## 5. FUNDRAISING/ FINANCIAL GOAL SETTING

JEANNIE: I was wondering if people have ideas of options to work on for fundraising. Shi-Ling's problem was that the initiatives we've been considering (mostly gift card sales) are a lot of work for little money. Even big events cost money. The best thing probably would be to educate parents about what they can do with the cards – they should consider them not only as gifts, but for their own use, and also to ask of coworkers and friends, etc. That way we could increase sales.

NANCY: You've probably discussed this already, but my recommendation would be to do the fundraising gift cards event quarterly so people can afford to pre-purchase cards for their regular spending on a quarterly basis. I would love to pay for all my groceries with the gift cards to benefit the daycares, but can't afford to do it all in one fell swoop.

JULIE: I think if we're going to do it, we should do it whole hog and repeat the fundraiser many times a year. But my question is always what are we spending the money on? Without a clear goal it doesn't make sense to make the effort.

MARLA: Shi-Ling had a really good suggestion to narrow the number of gifts cards we offer, to simplify the process to the most popular cards.

DARCELLE: There are concrete projects you could fundraise for: e.g. playgrounds perennially need upgrading and items like replacing plastic dishes with glass/ metal in centres. With playgrounds, the problem is there are no other sources of funding. Reasonably priced playgrounds can cost \$80,000. UBC CCS could work on a program to match funds raised by council for playgrounds.

MELISSA: I think it's important to have just one thing we focus on. Playgrounds are a constant that people will agree with.

KELLI: Whatever we do, I think we need to commit to a constant program for many years and not change it again next year. Maybe if we can raise \$10,000, Darcelle can match from her budget with \$10,000, and we can pressure UBC to also match with something.

LISA: How much have we been raising?

KELLI: Grocery fundraising is just \$2000 and about \$500 from labels. We could try to do a Chris Roskelley concert in addition. I move that we dedicate our fundraising efforts exclusively to playgrounds and in the immediate future we research ways of fundraising effectively.

CHRISTINA: If we go with that we'll have to make more money to make our donations effective, since playgrounds are so expensive.

LISA: What about if we set a goal of \$10,000 for playground infrastructure next year and advertise that to parents. Three intense fundraising rounds through the year would probably achieve that goal.

JEANNIE: People should also know they can earmark donations to UBC fundraising as going to UBC Childcare.

DARCELLE: We could end by giving grants to all centres who didn't get a grant last year to end the cycle and then move on to playground development.

JULIE: Ask for grant requests for our meeting in September and we will consider them then, and that will end the cycle.

KELLI: Deadline should be Sept. 1. Todd should figure out what our average grant was in past grants and give that as an upper limit.

MARLA: We should have a list of past projects approved to give centres an indication.

MAGED: I want daycares to propose what they want in terms of playground equipment and this will give us guidance on what the needs are for funding.

KELLI: I move that after a September round of centre grants, we shift to a long-term focus on playground development funding.

Kelli moved, Christina seconded. All in favour.

**ACTION ITEMS:** Todd to determine the average grant amount given to centres last year to set amount for September grants. Lisa and Kelli to revise and send out call for proposals to centres for September 1 deadline.

## 6. PARKING

KELLI: I sent Bev an email explaining to parents what the parking regulation changes will be around the daycares.

BEV: I am waiting for wording of the policy from Parking before sending it out. I haven't received anything back.

KELLI: I talked to Beth at Parking who is supposed to execute this, and she wants to know all information on parents who are requesting passes (name, email, driver's license, license plate, address, etc).

BEV: That's a lot of work. We have to send messages to all centres requesting information from parents.

JULIE: I have a problem with this since UBC came up with this unworkable parking system without consulting us and it's not the volunteer parent council's role to manage the exceptions we've worked out. Our role is not to collect all the info.

MAGED: Maybe through the online site where we pay our childcare fees, which is an account opened when we enroll in childcare and then disappears after?

KELLI: I have an email I composed to go out to parents that can be modified to give basic information to parents but not outline exactly how the passes will work. That can suffice for now.

**ACTION ITEMS:** Kelli to finesse email to send out to parents and clarify the situation with Parking Services.

## 7. NEXT YEAR'S EXECUTIVE

KELLI: Jeannie is willing to stay on as Fundraising Chair, Christina as VP Advocacy for Faculty. Todd and Lisa are leaving the UBC childcare system.

We definitely need people for positions of Secretary, President, possibly Treasurer, VP Advocacy for Staff and Students. People please think over the next month before the AGM about whether you or someone you know would be interested in these positions.

**ACTION ITEMS:** Council members should all consider whether or not they are willing to stand for an executive position for 2011-12. Also ask at centres for possible candidates who are not currently council members.

## 8. MISCELLANEOUS

KELLI: Csilla suggested last time that Mabel's Labels is a cheaper label provider. I looked back at 2007 minutes from when we made the decision and we had decided to offer both brands but later it turned out Mabel's Labels demands exclusive contracts with clients and we had already entered into a relationship with Lovable Labels.

I received an email from Miriam from Chuva who wondered if there was any progress on the stroller parking issue. After the last meeting, she indicated to her center that the Council was going to solve the problem. At the last meeting, we talked about getting a tarp for the backside of the main office building. Louise had offered to find and donate a tarp, but later suggested buying one. Should Council buy a tarp for Chuva's stroller parking?

JULIE: There must be some kind of synergy between Sustainability Office, Trek office, and others on campus to facilitate green transport to campus with strollers. They may be interested in financing construction of sturdy stroller storage.

MAGED: It's the perfect kind of project for those initiatives but someone just has to do the legwork and paperwork.

JULIE: Maged, could you and I work on this?

MAGED: Sure.

KELLI: A tarp might suffice for the time being.

DARCELLE: Chuva is welcomed to buy a tarp and install it on the backside of the main office.

KELLI: Let's ask Chuva to find a tarp in the time being until we can explore more permanent options.

**ACTION ITEMS:** Fundraising Chairs to sort out pros and cons of different label merchants and inform us of current status.

Maged and Julie to investigate potential funding mechanisms through green initiatives on campus for a stroller parking structure (or several) that multiple centres' families could use.

Kelli to inform Chuva parents that they should locate a tarp to serve their needs in the meantime.

## 9. CONFIRM NEXT MEETING

Next meeting (Annual General Meeting) will be held on Tuesday, June 14th at 7 pm in the Administration Building [2881 Acadia Road].

***All parents are welcome to attend.***