

NORTH SHORE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SUBSTANCE USE

MISSION STATEMENT

The North Shore Standing Committee on Substance Use will support community organizations to reduce the impact and incidence of substance abuse on the North Shore through advocacy, collaboration and leadership.

MINUTES

Tuesday, March 17, 2026 5:00 – 7:00 pm

In Person – Committee Room, North Vancouver Municipal Hall

Present:

Cllr James Hanson, Councillor, DNV
Cllr Don Bell, Councillor, CNV
Cllr Linda Watt, Councillor, DWV
Cllr Alison Morse, Councillor, Bowen Island
Sgt. Nick Bell, West Vancouver Police Department
Kulvir Mann, School Trustee, NV School District
Dave Stevenson, School Trustee, WV School District
Dr. Alexandria Choi, Vancouver Coastal Health

Guests: Dr. Michelle Brousson

Staff:

Eirikka Brandson, DNV Staff Liaison
Christina Bennett, DWV Staff Liaison
Lisa Wambaa, CNV Staff Liaison
Joshua Haglof, DNV Community Service Clerk

Regrets:

Cllr Jaime Cunliffe, Lions Bay
Chief Jen Thomas, Tsleil-Waututh Nation
Khelsilem, Council Chairperson, Squamish Nation
Inspector Judith Bertrand, North Vancouver RCMP

1. Welcome & Introductions

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:04 pm and committee members were introduced. The Committee welcomed back Dr. Alexandra Choi and the new members.

2. Adoption of Agenda

MOVED by Cllr Don Bell and seconded by Trustee Kulvir Mann
To adopt the agenda.

CARRIED

3. Adoption of December 3, 2025 Minutes

MOVED by Cllr Don Bell and seconded by Trustee Kulvir Mann
To adopt the minutes.

CARRIED

4. Financial Report

There was no discussion on the Financial Report. This is expected to be discussed at the next meeting.

5. Vancouver Coastal Health Update

Dr. Alexandria Choi provided a presentation on overdose data and cannabis use. The presentation indicated that deaths have gone down possibly because of the difference in drug supply that is less lethal but still worrisome. Information was also provided that overdose deaths have decreased from the 2024 peak to 2019/2021 levels.

6. Purple Chair Campaign – Updates from Committee Members

The Purple Chair Campaign is a North Shore-wide awareness initiative that honors community members lost to the toxic drug crisis. Each purple chair represents someone who is no longer with us, someone loved, missed, and remembered. Purple chairs are painted and placed across the North Shore, each symbolizing a life lost and serving as a visible call to action. The color purple is used internationally to represent grief and overdose awareness, while the empty chair symbolizes absence; a reminder of someone who should still be here.

Committee members were provided with an update regarding the directive from the previous meeting. Cllr Hanson indicated that the motion from the previous meeting received full support from District Council and that a few locations have been identified for the chairs.

Information was provided that approximately 31 chairs (the number of drug deaths on the North Shore in 2024) will be displayed. The task force will host another painting day and have also been working with Capilano University on creating additional media campaign tools. It was suggested that the coordinator be invited to attend the next committee meeting for a further update and that there is still work to be completed including creating an inventory and more chairs.

Committee members were also informed that in July 2025 the District of West Vancouver youth services and senior services participated in the campaign and two chairs were displayed in the atrium at the West Vancouver recreation centre. There were several social media posts with links to the task force website.

7. Discussion Topics for Next Meeting

The following topics will be discussed at the next meeting:

- Opioid deaths update and policy options related to cannabis retail outlets (VCH)
- Long term cognitive impacts of cannabis use (report/presentation) (VCH)
- Youth & Vaping – retail outlets and policy options (VCH)
- Update on the Purple Chair Campaign (NSHTF)
- Opportunities for people to re-engage with the community (Turning Point Society presentation)
- Financial Report (CNV)

8. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, May 7th, 2026.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 pm.