

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

Wednesday, May 28, 2025 5:00 – 7:00 pm

In Person – District Hall, 355 West Queens

Present:

Cllr James Hanson, Councillor, DNV
Cllr Alison Morse, Councillor, Bowen Island
Inspector Vaz Kassam, North Vancouver RCMP
Kulvir Mann, School Trustee, NV School District
Dave Stevenson, School Trustee, WV School District
Dr. Ceinwen Pope, Vancouver Coastal Health

Guests:

MacKenzie Gomez, Squamish Nation
Sean Burke, Squamish Nation

Regrets:

Cllr Don Bell, Councillor, CNV
Cllr Christine Cassidy, Councillor, DWV
Cllr Jaime Cunliffe, Lions Bay
Chief Jen Thomas, Tsleil-Waututh Nation
Khelsilem, Council Chairperson, Squamish Nation
Sgt. Chris Bigland, West Vancouver Police Department
Dr. Michelle Brousson

Staff:

Eirikka Brandson, DNV Staff Liaison
Alison Gelz, DWV Staff Liaison
Heather Evans, CNV Staff Liaison
Mary Jukich, Committee Clerk

1. Welcome & Introductions

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

2. Adoption of Agenda

MOVED by Trustee Mann and seconded by Cllr Morse
To adopt the agenda.

3. Adoption of February 12, 2025 Minutes

MOVED by Cllr Morse and Seconded by Trustee Mann
To approve the minutes.

4. Squamish Nation, Yúustway Health – State of Emergency, Pathways to Treatment

MacKenzie Gomez and Sean Burke, representatives from the Squamish Nation, provided a presentation on the impacts of the drug crisis to the Squamish Nation and some pathways to develop support for treatment and recovery. A team was put together to explore strategies to address the crisis and one of the strategies was building a mobile health App to provide information about available resources to access treatment.

The App was developed for the use of the Squamish Nation and as next steps, they wish to gather support and advocacy to work with the Ministry of Health to secure funding to continue this work. Moving forward, the intention is to make the tool accessible for all British Columbians so that anyone navigating treatment and recovery has access to the App.

Committee members were requested to provide a letter supporting this initiative to the Ministry of Health. During the discussion, concern was raised that there has already been work completed by the health authorities in this regard, and there may be some duplication of efforts. Accordingly, it was suggested that the include wording that the Nation continues to work with the health authorities and to ensure the alignment of work.

MOVED by Councillor Hanson, seconded by Trustee Stevenson:

That the North Shore Standing Committee on Substance Use will provide a letter of support for the initiative.

CARRIED

In moving forward for the next committee meeting, it was suggested that the committee may wish to further discuss the different types of treatment, resources, different facets of treatment, operators, funding, etc., and invite a presenter possibly from Vancouver Coastal Health.

5. Vancouver Coastal Health Updates:
5.1 Non-Lethal Impacts of Fentanyl Overdoses

Dr. Ceinwen Pope, Vancouver Coastal Health provided a general surveillance update presentation on the toxic drug crisis and related brain injuries. Information was provided that in terms of the overall unregulated deaths in BC, there has been fewer deaths than at the same time last year.

6. Education and Awareness Campaign

As an update to the education and awareness campaign, some committee members had previously indicated they were in favour of amplifying messages developed by Vancouver Coastal Health but not provide any financial commitment. There have been several discussions regarding the campaign but no consensus from all committee members to participate either financially or with in-kind resources with staff time and it may be unlikely that one municipality will be able to take a leadership role to launch the campaign.

Committee members were informed about a District motion from March 17, 2025, from report [“Facilitating a Naloxone Program in the District of North Vancouver”](#) that was to target businesses and as such, Vancouver Coastal Health has been working on a one-page communication that will be distributed through the North Vancouver Chamber of Commerce with some high level messaging around the toxic drug crisis on the North Shore and what businesses can do in terms of reducing stigma, being prepared to respond to an overdose emergency, and supporting employees and the public.

Information can be found on the District [website](#) including the link to the [Drug Poisoning Crisis & North Shore Business resource guide](#).

Committee members discussed some possible projects, and the following items were proposed:

- Representatives from Vancouver Coastal Health could attend a future meeting to speak to the work with the North Vancouver Chamber particularly as this work is targeting businesses and then the committee members could request whether their municipalities wished to consider this work.
- Request Vancouver Coastal Health share general messaging which could be circulated to the committee and then committee members would work with their own entities as to whether or not to amplify the messaging.
- Discussed participation in Overdose Awareness Day, including opportunities to increase visibility of the Empty Chair/Purple Chair Campaign. Consider creating an activity to enhance public engagement, such as placing Purple Chairs in libraries, seniors' centres, and community centres.

Action Item - Staff will further explore this idea and circulate photos of the chair to the committee, and at the next meeting, the discussion will revolve around the committee's involvement in this regard.

7. Financial Report – City of North Vancouver

The financial report was not available and will be brought to the next committee meeting.

8. Discussion Topics for Next Meeting

- 8.1 VCH presentation to explore various aspects of substance use treatment, including types of treatment, available resources, service operators, and funding
- 8.2 Custody Project Update
- 8.3 Inventory of Service Providers that support mental health and addictions

9. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date was scheduled for Wednesday, July 9, 2025.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm.