

Quesnel
Women's Resource Centre

Coordinating Collective Orientation Package



QUESNEL WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE
COORDINATING COLLECTIVE ORIENTATION PACKAGE

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10/2009

Quesnel Women's Resource Centre Society

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HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday - Friday 9:00am-4:00pm

WOMEN'S CENTRE COORDINATING COLLECTIVE MEETINGS:

3rd Thursday of the Month - 3:30 pm

MISSION STATEMENT

The Quesnel Women's Resource Centre is a feminist collective committed to promoting the rights of all women and providing women-centered services in our community.

GOALS OF THE QUESNEL WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE

1. To provide women with access to resources, counselling and self-help programs that will assist them with life choices.
2. To actively address all forms of violence against women at all levels of the community.
3. To work towards the elimination of poverty.
4. To challenge sexism and all forms of discrimination against women including racism, homo/bi/transphobia, at all levels of the community and help women achieve their rightful place in society.
5. To enhance the status of women by addressing issues of importance to women such as access to high-quality, universally accessible child care, and the right to equal pay for work of equal value.

HERSTORY OF THE QUESNEL WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE:

In 1979, a small group of women joined together and applied for start-up funding. In 1980 a \$5000 grant was received from the federal government's Secretary of State allowing the group to hire Frances McLean. The process of becoming a Society was then initiated and later charitable status was granted.

Location

By December 1981 the Quesnel Women's Resource Centre was in operation at 466 Reid Street. The Centre received a grant for renovations, which included training for women in the areas of carpentry, wiring, dry walling and furniture building. However, the space was not easily accessible as it was down a long flight of stairs and there were no windows and no playground for children. In June 1992, we acquired our current facility at 690 McLean Street. This building provides a wheelchair-accessible, secure and stable facility and is owned rather than rented. In 2009, the Rotary Club of Quesnel provided a donation to rebuild our wheelchair ramp and to refurbish the exterior of our home.

The Strawberry Patch

In the first few years a number of ambitious projects were undertaken. In 1982, the Strawberry Patch Childminding Centre was created providing care for up to 16 children 18 months to 5 years for a limited number of hours per week. The Strawberry Patch was the only drop-in service in the community where women could leave their children without an appointment while they went to the doctor, shopped or just got some time away.

However, due to limited licensing and no other funding, there was not sufficient income to cover the operational costs. For many years the Women's Centre subsidized the facility but, in 1992 the service was discontinued.

Kool Kids Clothing Store

The children's clothing store was an attempt at becoming more financially self-sufficient. Women had the opportunity to work at the store as volunteers and received clerical, cashier and management skills. But, in the three years the store was in operation it did not contribute financially to operational funds for the Women's Centre and so this project was also dropped.

Job Training

The Women's Centre provided job-training programs for women for many years operating a Youth Training Options program and five Re-entry programs through

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federal Canada Employment and Immigration's funding. Each of these programs provided job orientation training for 10 - 20 women.

Needs Assessment

In 1991, a survey of women identified the issues needing the most attention as: employment and training, education, family violence and transportation. Workshops were held to address these issues.

Planning For Change Project

In September 1992, Patty Kimpton was hired for six months to help to co-ordinate the existing services for women as well to build on network and public relations in the community.

Breaking the Barrier

In October 1992, Jasu Kotak was hired for a short-time to provide support, information, and translation services for the immigrant community in the area.

Stopping the Violence

A Sexual Abuse Counsellor is on hand to provide counselling for women who have experienced abuse. Sherry McMillan is the current counsellor for Stopping the Violence (STV) and Catherine Forbes is a part time STV Counsellor. Initially, the BC's Ministry of Women's Equality funded this program but after the Women's Equality Ministry was ended the funding came from the BC Ministry of Housing and Social Programs. Currently, the STV program is funded by the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, Victim Services and Crime Prevention Division.

The Volunteer program

Volunteer involvement has been a critical component of the Women's Centre since its inception. Volunteers have done an enormous amount of the work at the Women's Centre over the years. In return they learn valuable skills and many leave their volunteer positions for full-time employment. We also benefit from practicum students from the College of New Caledonia's Social Service Worker certificate program and the University of Northern BC's social work and nursing programs. Often we hire summer students with funding received from the federal government and they assist with ongoing projects and activities and can be essential for continuity through the summer.

Uma Yaz

Quesnel has had a high rate of teen pregnancy and the Women's Centre has assisted these teen mothers by operating, in partnership with the School District

#28, a student focused day care on Bowron Avenue. Additional support for the young mothers was provided to help them stay in school. For some of the several years that Uma Yaz was open, alternative education was offered on one side of the facility and the day care operated on the other side. In 2002, the BC Ministry of Children and Families cut the enhancement grant that was crucial for providing the specialized services and we had to close Uma Yaz in 2003.

Support and community involvement:

The Women's Centre has sponsored a number of support groups over the years including SOS (Survivors of Sexual Abuse), Adult Children of Alcoholics, Parents of Sexually Abused Children.

Over the years the Centre has facilitated many individuals as well as community groups including: Mental Health Association, Quesnel Food Co-Op, Quesnel Environmental Society, Tough Love, One Parents Association, Alcohol Anonymous and Alanon, Mothers Against Drunk Drivers, Men's Support Group, Cariboo Musicians Association, La Leche League, Nobody's Perfect Parenting among others.

Status of Women:

The Status of Women Committee has tackled a variety of issues and projects throughout the Centre's history and the Women's Centre has been involved in campaigns to promote policies, legislation and services which would benefit women and to fight those policies that are a disadvantage.

Some of these campaigns have been local in nature, such as the fight to preserve the right to Unemployment Insurance for seasonal farm workers in the mid nineties and the struggle against the apprehension of large numbers of the community's children by the government in 1997 and 1998. Anti-pornography campaigns, anti-violence work and awareness of poverty issues have led the Centre into schools, hospitals, prisons and onto the streets in protest.

Other campaigns have been provincial or national in scope. The Women's Centre is a member of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) and through NAC, the Centre was involved in the Women's March Against Poverty in 1996. Quesnel women went to Ottawa with thousands of others from across the country to demand an end to violence against women and better living conditions. We were also involved in a NAC BC project that identified the needs of women who are involved in the child welfare system.

Since the early 1990's, the Women's Centre has also been a member of the BC Association of Women's Centres. As a member of this group we have also been involved in province-wide actions to lobby government officials for better child care, improved social assistance rates, stronger anti-violence laws among other campaigns.

Service Canada

In 2008, the Centre was approved to participate in a Job Creation Partnership with Service Canada. The JCP program allowed the Centre to hire two women for one year in order to conduct a needs assessment survey of women across BC and the Yukon to determine the issues of priority to northern women; organize, plan, and implement a northern women's conference based on the needs assessment survey; and finally, to create a website for the Centre.

Northern Women's Conference

In April of 2009, the QWRC hosted the *Connecting Northern Women: Northern Women's Conference*. The conference was attended by 152 women from various places across BC and included two women who came from Whitehorse, YK. Six Women Centres were in attendance including the QWRC; the Williams Lake Women's Contact Society; Victoria Faulkner's Women's Centre; 100 Mile House Women's Centre; the Northern Women's Centre and the Fort St. John Women's Centre.

The focus of the conference was determined from a needs assessment questionnaire that was conducted in December 2008. The top four issues of concern surrounded the areas of poverty, violence against women, addictions, and housing. These issues became the focus for our conference.

Women's Memorial Monument

In September of 2007, a group of women from the Quesnel Women's Resource Centre came together to work towards getting a memorial monument built in Quesnel that would honour local missing and murdered women as well as all women who have been victims of violence in our community. Seven women have lost their lives to violence from our community and an additional 5 are still missing under suspicious circumstances. The total project cost is \$13,072.50. To date, October 19, 2009, the Centre has raised \$10,789.00 towards the project. It is hoped that the Centre can break ground for this project Spring 2010.

Finances

For many years, up until 1989, the federal government's Secretary of State provided the Centre with operational funding of \$32,000/year. In 1990, the

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budget was reduced to \$27,000, to pay the salaries of two part-time coordinators, the rent and utilities. This amount was reduced over the years and was no longer operational funding but was tied to particular projects. In 2005, the Conservative government changed the funding criteria to make it very difficult for Women's Centres to access funding and in 2006, for the first time, we operated without federal government support. This meant reduced hours of operation and reduced staff time.

In April 1992, the Quesnel Women's Resource Centre received funding from the Women's Equality ministry of the provincial government in the amount of \$37,000 to cover operational expenses and to provide direct services. A stabilization grant from the province was used to do the extensive renovation of the new building. In 2001, the provincial Liberal government abolished the Women's Equality ministry and announced cuts to Women's Centres. Our operational funding was cut completely by the provincial government in March of 2004 while our Stopping the Violence counsellors continues to be funded by the province. We also receive some money for our Outreach program from the province.

Over the years, we have received project-based contracts for some of our finances. For example, the City of Quesnel gave us a small grant to participate in a community safety audit. A federal grant allowed us to provide services specific to homeless women or women in danger of homelessness in 2005-2006. Because of the increasing poverty of women, our coordinator worked with other community agencies to get a homeless shelter in Quesnel in 2007.

The Centre currently employs 1 full time staff member and 2 part-time staff members.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Drop-in Service: There is always someone here to talk to women who want to share their ups and downs. The coffee/tea is always on. We have comfortable and private surroundings for nursing mothers. We invite all women to come in and eat lunch, use the washroom or just come in for a break.

Nobody's Perfect Program: We partner with Quesnel Family Services to offer a young parenting program that has both parenting courses and ongoing support. The provincial funding for this program was terminated but we have been able to help the community receive this program with money from Direct Access and by teaming up with Quesnel Family Services who will run the NBP Program from their agency.

Luna Women's Wellness Clinic: The Clinic provides health information and services to the women of the City of Quesnel. The health care services provided include STI testing, pregnancy tests, emergency contraception, pap smears, and breast exams. The Clinic is open every Thursday from 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm and is staffed by a rotation of trained public health nurses. Clients are able to take an hour with the nurse to receive services as well as speak to the nurse about concern or issues that are important to the client. The Clinic is by drop-in only and provides child-minding when needed. Health information is provided in books, pamphlets, brochures and other forms of information all maintained in the Women Centre Library. Also, we provide access to internet health sites and printouts. This information covers many women's health issues such as breast cancer, menopause, stress reduction, drug use, bone health, sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy. The Clinic also provides informational workshops on various topics including healthy eating, alternative remedies, and foot care for diabetics and others. Any woman in the community is welcome to the Centre to access this information.

Sexual Assault Response Line: In August of 1999, the Women's Resource Centre used some surplus funding to get the SARL line up and running. Women, men and children who have been sexually assaulted/abused, can call 24 hours/day, to obtain anonymous, confidential support, information and on-going advocacy to deal with the assault or abuse. As of March 2003, the Centre's staff is volunteering their time in order to continue this service.

Annual Events: We organize public awareness events to protest poverty and violence against women and children and celebrate women's achievements. International Women's Day, Take Back the Night, the December 6th, Montreal Memorial and Women's History Month in October are marked by activities each year.

Resource Library: The library contains books on subjects such as: addictions, anger, equality, health, justice, mental health, self-help, self-esteem, violence against women, and many more. All women are welcome to borrow these books.

Advocacy/Referral Services: If a woman is not sure where to go for assistance, we can help her access the services and assistance she needs.

Social Action: We also advocate and lobby for changes to government policies and programs that will improve women's lives. This usually involves meeting with others who have similar concerns and writing letters, facilitating workshops to educate, meeting with politicians, or holding marches. More recently, the BC Coalition of Women's Centres has been actively challenging the Liberal government's cutbacks that have impacted women. This includes protesting the scheduled cut of our current operational funding.

Volunteer Training Program: We offer women the opportunity to be involved in the operation of the Centre. A woman who is interested in the Centre's work and who wants to upgrade her skills may assist with committee work, general office work such as filing, faxing, photocopying, organizing the library, answering the telephone, and using the computers. Volunteers are also invited to familiarize themselves with the policies and philosophy of the Centre and to contribute to decision-making at the Centre by attending meetings of interest to them. Volunteers can also be involved in the many committees at the Centre. Volunteers will gain organizational skills, interpersonal skills, knowledge of community services and enhanced self-esteem.

Newsletter: We publish a newsletter four times a year to inform people in Quesnel about our activities and to increase awareness of issues of concern to women.

Networking: We work with other local agencies on concerns of the community and we are active members of the Quesnel Child, Youth and Family Network, the Child Abuse Committee, Family Violence Task Force, Aboriginal Justice Circle, Sexual Assault Response Team, and Community Services Planning Committees. We have

enjoyed a good working relationship with all of the other social service agencies in Quesnel, sharing information and support.

Educational Programs: These programs are available whenever there is enough interest. We are always open to suggestions. Is there a course that you would like us to offer? Do you have some skills to share? Please give us a call.

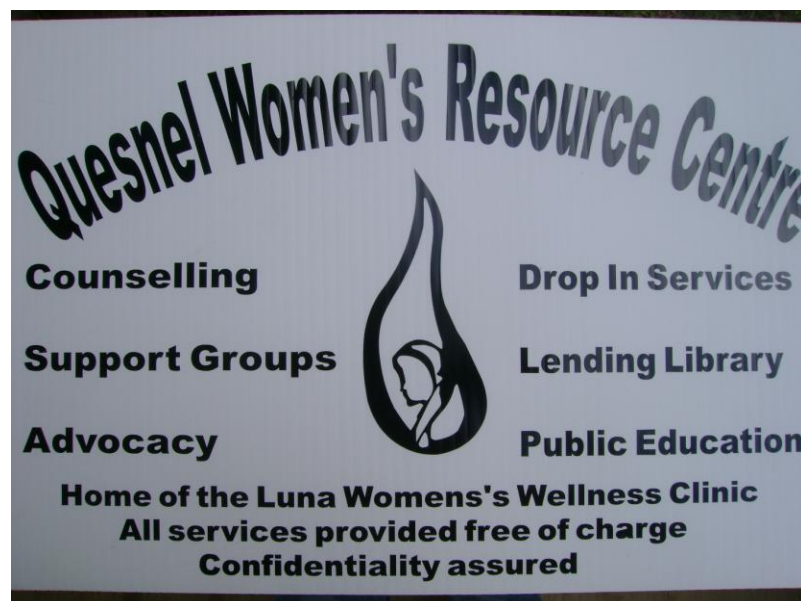
Current Programs include:

Self-esteem/Assertiveness Group: This group runs once a week for 6 weeks, usually in the spring and in the fall. The goal of this group is to raise awareness of self and build on women's self-esteem.

Anger Management Group: This group runs once a week for 6 weeks, usually in the spring and in the fall. The goal of this group is to understand anger to realize that it is ok to be angry. But there are different kinds of anger and anger that turns to rage is not good anger. Participants learn how to express their anger appropriately.

Survivors of Sexual Abuse Group: This 12-week group is for women who have experienced historical abuse. It follows the workbook The Courage to Heal. The group runs 1 to 2 times per year depending on interest. Contact Sherry McMillan for referral to the group.

All groups are free of charge to women; however, a donation can be made if a woman can afford it.



QUESNEL WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE STAFF - 2009

Administrative Coordinator: Melanie MacDonald

As Administrative Coordinator, Melanie's job is to administrate all programs/contracts; she is also the community liaison for the Women's Centre.

Stopping the Violence (STV) Counsellor: Sherry McMillan

As STV counsellor; Sherry's job is to counsel women, particularly those who are healing from abuse.

Outreach Worker/ part-time STV Counsellor: Catherine Forbes

As our Outreach Worker, Catherine accompanies women to various types of appointments and facilitates workshops such as Self-esteem/assertiveness and Anger management. Catherine is also a part-time STV Counsellor.

Janitorial (Wednesdays): Jewel Ryzak

Janitorial (Saturdays): Eva Bruce

QUESNEL WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

QUESNEL WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE'S CONSTITUTION: The Women's Resource Centre is a registered non-profit, non-partisan organization. An initial constitution reflected the provincial government's Society Act's requirements. In 2003, the Constitution was revised in an attempt to have it more accurately reflect the way the Centre is structured and operates. You will find a copy in this manual.

QUESNEL WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE COORDINATING COLLECTIVE: The Centre's structure reflects a feminist philosophy that attempts to minimize power imbalances. Therefore, the Centre is a non-hierarchical organization. No one woman is in charge. Five to nine volunteer community representatives are selected from the Women's Centre members at an Annual General Meeting each year. They join staff, volunteers and practicum students to make decisions as a collective.

In order to follow our philosophy which emphasizes the empowerment of all women, we have designated community representative positions on our Coordinating Collective for women from doubly disadvantaged groups, including aboriginal women, women of colour, lesbian/bi-sexual/transgendered women and women with disabilities.

Members of the Coordinating Collective are responsible to the women who selected them and are required to uphold and abide by the constitution and by-laws of the organization.

General functions and duties of a Coordinating Collective may include:

- promoting the organization to the community
- setting up committees to carry out various activities on behalf of the organization
- fundraising, publicity, and lobbying
- carrying out directives from the annual general meeting or
- media relations
- meeting Societies Act and other legal requirements
- policy and procedure development for ratification by the membership
- hiring/firing/suspensions
- financial management

Officers: The Coordinating Collective may also nominate and select from its community representative members, some women to serve as what some call "table officers", the president, vice-president, recording secretary, and treasurer. Sometimes, government agencies want particular women designated to these positions to sign funding agreements so these positions are generally filled. The secretary is to be responsible for correspondence, and minutes and the treasurer is responsible for ensuring the society's financial affairs are in order. In practice, all Women's Resource Centre's Coordinating Collective members are responsible for the organization, and individual women do not generally do specific work in these positions.

COORDINATING COLLECTIVE MEETINGS: General Coordinating Collective meetings are held regularly, on the third Thursday of the month at 3:30pm. All women are welcome. The days and times may change to accommodate the needs of the current collective members. Decisions about the Centre are made at the general Coordinating Collective meetings.

WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE COMMITTEES: Committees direct and participate in the work of the Centre and make recommendations to the Coordinating Collective meetings for ratification. Each committee is made up of staff members, community representatives from the Coordinating Collective and other interested women. There are some committees that have existed throughout the Centre's history while other committees are formed for particular purposes and dissolve when their goals have been met or the need for them no longer exists.

The Centre has a number of organizational committees, such as the personnel committee, building/safety committee, newsletter committee, fundraising/finance committee and program-related advisory committees such as the Stopping the Violence committee.

Some committees have provided support and guidance to our various projects: Uma Yaz Steering Committee, Nobody's Perfect Committee, Women's Health Committee, Sexual Assault Response Line Steering Committee, and the Northern Women's Conference Steering Committee. Other, broader committees oversee other work such as the anti-poverty committee or the women's health committee.

MEMBERSHIP: All women have the right to buy a membership to the Quesnel Women's Resource Centre. The cost of this membership is a sliding scale up to \$15.00 a year.

Being a member of the Women's Resource Centre entitles you to:

- Give input into the direction of the Centre;
- Make full use of the Centre's existing lending library;
- Learn more about Women's issues and history of women;
- Learn how to listen to your inner self and the opinion of others;
- Better your own communication skills;
- Become familiar with community resources that are available;
- Learn to utilize existing support systems and enlarge on same;
- Attend all Centre committee and board meetings ;
- Get involved in campaigns to improve the lives of women in our community.

CONSENSUS DECISION-MAKING: The Centre believes in democracy and attempts to include all women affected by decisions in the decision-making process. Therefore, a consensus decision-making process, where all women's input and agreement is sought, is used at all meetings.

Consensus decision-making is used widely in the women's movement. It has its roots with Quakers and the peace movement and also grew from early feminist analysis directed towards sharing of power and moving away from a win-lose dynamic.

The *advantages* to consensus decision-making are:

- Individual women have voice and power in the decision-making process;
- The win-lose mentality is eliminated;
- Each woman has ownership over the decision because she was part of the process;
- It produces more intelligent decisions by incorporating the best decisions of everyone.

The *disadvantages* are:

- It takes more time;
- It can appear inefficient.

In order for consensus to work well in a group there must be:

- An underlying unity of purpose or philosophical base;
- A commitment to the group;
- A commitment to the process;
- A willingness to learn new skills;
- A willingness to examine your personal values, judgements and behaviour.

Procedure for consensus decision making

- Either the facilitator/chair or a group member presents the issue.
- The women connected with the issue explain it and begin discussion.
- Agreement may be reached at this point and a decision made. If, however, there are differing viewpoints, consensus is not reached.
- A round may then be initiated.
- In a round each person comments on the issue.
- A round is not interrupted.
- Each member has her say without others commenting on it. Questions are asked only for clarification (if something wasn't understood or clear).
- A round may be timed. Each member receives equal time (*eg.* 2 or 5 minutes). Equalizing time helps to equalize participation.
- When the round ends the chair/ facilitator summarizes what was said and clarifies the current status of the issue.

Another round may be needed if consensus is not reached. On the other hand, individual differences may have merged after hearing other group members' viewpoints. The facilitator may then ask if there is agreement on the issue. If the total group is in agreement, the decision is recorded.

If there is No consensus:

Making decisions by consensus can be a difficult, time consuming and frustrating experience. It can also be a creative and dynamic process enabling individuals to share in decisions affecting themselves and their work. A time-out may be needed to allow members to go away for awhile and consider the options before coming to a decision.

Reviewing your decision-making process may help:

- Has everyone had the opportunity to explain his or her position?
- Has everyone listened to each explanation?
- Have all the options been listed and explored?

- Have the objections been clearly expressed?

Roles that may be filled are a facilitator/chair, to keep the group on track, a minute taker to record decisions, and a timekeeper who serves as the group's clock-watcher. An optional role is an assistant facilitator who maintains a list of people wishing to speak. Roles should be rotated at regular intervals so that everyone has the opportunity to develop new skills. A brief evaluation at the end of the meeting to look at what went well and what could be improved will assist everyone's learning.

Facilitator/chair duties

- Introduce rounds, brainstorming, silence;
- Make clear when group discussion moves towards decision-making;
- Facilitate decision-making process and be responsible for;
 - a) Paraphrasing b) summarizing c) testing for consensus d) making clear statement of decision e) seeing that it's recorded.
- Facilitate implementing decision:
 1. State tasks to be done
 2. Make sure they're allocated
 3. Agree on time required and deadline
 4. Record

At the Women's Centre, it is expected that all women in attendance at the meetings will take responsibility for making the process effective.

- The Chair for 2009/2010 is Mary Gradnitzer and the Vice Chair is Bev Faulkner as passed by consensus at the October AGM.

COMPLAINT POLICY & PROBLEM SOLVING PROCEDURE (DRAFT)

PREAMBLE:

The Coordinating Collective of the Quesnel Women's Resource Centre welcomes constructive criticism in order to improve its services to the community. Criticism or complaints will be dealt with using a problem solving procedure. Confidentiality will be respected as much as possible but cannot always be guaranteed.

Unethical practices or illegal acts must be reported immediately to the Coordinating Collective and will be dealt with according to the Society's Act.

Procedure for Processing General Complaints

Step 1. Give constructive feedback to staff by filling out evaluation forms distributed after workshops, groups, presentations and other programs.

Step 2 Seek an interview with a staff and or Collective member if Step 1 has not addressed the complaint. A neutral staff member or a representative from the Personnel Committee or Coordinating Collective may be requested to be present.

Step 3. If satisfaction has not been achieved in Step 2, submit a written or verbal description of the problem to the Personnel Committee or to the Coordinating Collective.

The Personnel Committee will address issues related to staff performance and report to the Collective.

The Collective will address structural problems such as space, access and safety.

The Collective in consultation with the Personnel Committee will address unethical practices or illegal acts according to the Society's Act.

Resolution / Evaluation

Step 1. Staff reviews Evaluation/feedback forms. Improvements or appropriate changes will be put in place. Staff will file evaluation forms in a program binder for three years so that evaluations can be readily accessed by the Collective for reports or used for funding applications.

Step 2. Actions to be taken will be documented and reviewed with complainant within an agreed time frame. These actions and progress notes are to be filed in a secure and confidential manner.

Step 3. If a suitable resolution has not been found at this stage, the problem will be presented to the Personnel Committee or to the Collective. A suggested resolution will be presented to the complainant in person and /or in written form. The resolution to a problem will be kept on file at the Resource Centre. Follow-up or review dates may be part of the resolution.

Procedure for Anonymous Complaints: Anonymous descriptions of problems may be dropped into the suggestion box or a letter/ verbal request may be given to the Personnel Committee or Collective asking for anonymity. The Collective will try to honour anonymity but this may not always be possible if it involves a staff or Coordinating Collective member particularly if unethical practices or illegal acts must be investigated.

Resolution of Anonymous Complaints

Staff will first deal with anonymous complaints submitted to the suggestion box. Issues that cannot be resolved by the staff, will be referred directly to the Personnel Committee or Coordinating Collective. The Coordinating Collective will address complaints received by the Collective in verbal or written form. Resolution will be made available through minutes.

CONSTITUTION QUESNEL WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE

1. The name of the Society is **Quesnel Women's Resource Centre Society**.
2. The purposes of the Society are:
 - a.) To assess and meet the needs of women in the Quesnel area.
 - b.) To assist and empower all women, and particularly those from marginalized groups including women of colour, immigrant women, aboriginal women, poor women, women with disabilities, lesbians and transgendered women, elderly and socially isolated women, by:
 - i. providing a drop-in and information centre
 - ii. providing information, counselling and self-help programs that will assist them with life choices
 - c.) To enhance the status of women by addressing issues of importance to women such as all forms of violence against women and children, poverty, access to high-quality, universally accessible child care, and the right to equal pay for work of equal value.
 - d.) To challenge sexism and all forms of discrimination against women including racism, homo/bi/transphobia, ageism, and ableism, at all levels of the community and help women achieve their rightful place in society.
3. In the event of winding-up or dissolution of the society, funds and assets of the society remaining after the satisfaction of its debts and liabilities, shall be given or transferred to such organization or organizations concerned with the same or similar problems and purposes of this Society, as may be determined by the members of the Society at the time of winding-up or dissolution. This provision is unalterable.
4. The purposes of the Society shall be carried out without purpose of monetary gain for its "non-staff" members and any profits or other accretions to the Society shall be used for promoting its purpose. This provision is unalterable.

BYLAWS
of the
QUESNEL WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE

Part I - Interpretation

1. Quesnel Women's Centre's "**Coordinating Collective**" is the governing body of the Society. The Coordinating Collective consists of an elected body of a minimum of 5 to a maximum of 9 "community representatives" as well as other Committee members representatives as provided for in these bylaws. The Coordinating Collective is responsible for ensuring that records of the Society are kept and funds of the Society are properly kept and accounted for. The Coordinating Collective is responsible for all the decisions made on behalf of the Society.
2. A "**Community representative**" is a selected member of the Coordinating Committee elected from the membership of the Quesnel Women's Resource Centre.

Part II - Membership

1. A member is any woman, aged 16 or older, who endorses the objectives of the Society and who pays an Annual Membership fee.
2. Every member shall uphold the constitution and comply with these bylaws.
3. The amount of the annual membership dues may be changed from time to time at a general meeting of the Coordinating Collective of the Society. These fees will include a "sliding scale" which takes into account individual woman's ability to pay the fee.
4. All members are in good standing except a member who has failed to pay her current annual membership fee, or any other subscription or debit due and owing by her to the Society, and she is not in good standing so long as the debt remains unpaid.
5. All members are welcome to attend the general meetings of the Coordinating Collective and participate in the work of the Coordinating Collective.

6. A woman may cease to be a member of the Society:
 - a) by mailing or delivering her resignation in writing to the Society;
 - b) on her death, or in the case of the Society, on dissolution;
 - c) on being expelled;
 - d) on having been a member not in good standing for 12 (twelve) consecutive months.
7.
 - a) A member may be expelled by a special resolution of the members at a general meeting of the Coordinating Collective.
 - b) The notice of a special resolution for expulsion of the member shall be accompanied by a brief statement of the reason or reasons for the proposed expulsion.
 - c) The member who is the subject of the proposed resolution for expulsion or her agent shall be given an opportunity to be heard at the general meeting before the special resolution is decided.
8. The Society shall maintain a register of members in accordance with the Society Act.

Part III - Meeting of Members

1. **General meetings** of the Society shall be held at such time and place, in accordance with the Society Act, as the Coordinating Collective determines.
 - a) Notice of a *General meeting* shall specify the place, the day and hour of the meetings and, in case of special business the general nature of that business.
 - b) The accidental omission to give notice of a meeting to, or the non-receipt of a notice by, any of the members entitled to receive notice does not invalidate proceedings at that meeting.

2. **Special General meetings** of the society may be called at any time by the Community Representatives or at the written request of ten percent (10%) of the membership in accordance with Section 58 of the Society Act as amended from time to time.
3. An **Annual General meeting** of the Society shall be held at least once in every calendar year and not more than 15 (fifteen) months after the date of the last preceding Annual General meeting.
 - a) The Society must give not less than 14 days written notice of an Annual General meeting to those members entitled to receive notice.
 - b) There shall be an election of a minimum of 5 to a maximum of 9 "community representative" members to the Coordinating Collective to a term of 1 (one) year. Election procedures at the Annual General meeting shall be determined by the members present.
 - i. Proxy voting is not permitted.
 - c) The auditor's report will be presented for approval and the auditor for the next year will be appointed.
 - d) A report from the Coordinating Collective is made to the Society membership.
4. A **quorum** for any General meeting or Annual General meeting of the Society is 4 (four) members of the Coordinating Collective, at least 2 (two) of which must be "community representative" members.
 - a) No business shall be conducted at a meeting of the Society when a quorum is not present.
 - b) If at any time during a meeting of the Society there ceases to be a quorum present, business then in progress shall be suspended until there is a quorum present.
 - c) If within 30 (thirty) minutes for the time appointed for a meeting of the members, a quorum is not present, the meeting shall be rescheduled to a time and place agreed upon by those present. The Coordinating Collective members not in attendance will be given

adequate prior notice of the next meeting. If after 30 (thirty) minutes from the appointed time of the second scheduled meeting a quorum is not present, those present shall constitute a quorum.

Part IV - Coordinating Collective

1. The Coordinating Collective is the governing body of the Society. The community representative members of the Coordinating Collective are elected for a (1) one year term by the membership at the Annual General meeting and these community representatives are not staff members. Representatives of the Standing Committees constitute the additional Coordinating Collective members.
 - a) The Coordinating Collective shall endeavour to include historically disadvantaged women on the Coordinating Collective. Historically disadvantaged women include aboriginal women, racialized women, lesbian/transgendered women, women with disabilities, young women and women with low-incomes.
 - b) The Coordinating Collective may at any time appoint a Society member to fill a "community representative" vacancy to serve the unexpired term until the next Annual General meeting.
2. A Coordinating Collective member may be removed before the expiration of her term by a special resolution of the members at a special general meeting of the Coordinating Collective and a successor may be appointed to serve until the next Annual General meeting.
 - a) The notice of a special resolution for expulsion of the "community representative" Coordinating Collective member shall be accompanied by a brief statement of the reason or reasons for the proposed expulsion.
 - b) The Coordinating Collective member, who is the subject of the proposed resolution for expulsion or her agent, shall be given an opportunity to be heard at the general meeting before the special resolution is decided.

3. The Coordinating Collective may exercise all such powers and do all such acts and things as the Society may exercise and do and which are not by these bylaws or statute or otherwise lawfully directed or required to be exercised or done by the Society in a General meeting, but subject, nevertheless, to the provisions of:
 - a) all laws affecting the Society
 - b) these bylaws and
 - c) rules, not inconsistent with these bylaws, which are made from time to time by the Society in a General meeting
4. The Coordinating Collective may designate from the "community representatives", a chairperson, vice-chairperson, a secretary and treasurer. They may be requested by the Coordinating Collective to fulfill particular duties from time to time. Any member present at a meeting may undertake duties such as chairing the meeting and keeping minutes.
5. The secretary shall be responsible for:
 - a) The correspondence of the Society
 - b) Notices of meetings of the Society and Coordinating Collective
 - c) Minutes of all meetings of the Society and Coordinating Collective
 - d) Custody of all records and documents of the Society except those required to be kept by the treasurer

➤ The Secretary for 2009/2010 is Maggie Bello as passed by consensus at the October AGM.
6. The Treasurer shall be responsible for:
 - a) The financial records, including books of accounts necessary to comply with the Society's Act and
 - b) Presentation of financial statements to the Coordinating Collective, members of the Society and other as required.

➤ The Treasurer for 2009/2010 is Jean Birch as passed by consensus at the October AGM.

7. The Coordinating Collective may meet together at such times and at such places as they think fit for the dispatch of business and otherwise regulate their meetings and proceedings as they see fit.
8. The Coordinating Collective members shall be responsible for ensuring the affairs of the Society are in order including ensuring that records including proper financial records, minutes of all meetings and documents of Society are maintained, reviewed, approved, and stored.
9. Four (4) members of the Coordinating Collective shall have signing authority for the Society. One staff member may be designated as one of the signing authorities. If a staff member is one of the 4 (four), this staff member shall not be involved in keeping the financial records. Cheques must be signed by 2 (two) of the 4 (four) signing authorities.
 - Christina Baird, Jean Birch, Mary Gradnitzer and Maggie Bello are signing officers for 2009/2010 as passed by consensus at the 2009 AGM.
10. No "community representative" Coordinating Collective member shall be remunerated for being or acting as a Coordinating Collective member but she may be reimbursed for expenses necessarily incurred by her engaged in the affairs of the Society in accordance with policy as may from time to time be made by the Coordinating Collective.
11. A Coordinating Collective member who is personally interested in a proposed contract or transaction with the Society shall disclose fully and promptly the nature and extent of her interest to the Coordinating Collective.
12. The Coordinating Collective may delegate any, but not all, of their powers to Committees. Generally, committees make recommendations to the Coordinating Collective.
13. Committees must abide by the constitution and bylaws of the Society and the policies and procedures of the Society.
14. There shall be 2 (two) Standing Committees: Personnel and Safety/Building. Each Standing Committee shall include at least 2 (two) "community representative" members of the Coordinating Committee and 1 (one) staff member.

15. Additional Ad Hoc or Standing Committees may be constituted as necessary.

Part V - Decision-making

1. No resolution/motion for a decision proposed at a meeting need be seconded and any Society member may propose a resolution.
2. All decisions of the Society shall be made by consensus of all members present. All decisions shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting that will be approved at the next meeting by those present as an accurate reflection of the decision.
3. In such circumstances where consensus is impossible to achieve, the Coordinating Collective may elect to proceed with a vote.
 - a) A Society member in good standing present at a meeting is entitled to one vote.
 - b) A Society members participating in the meeting by telephone, or by other communications medium and are able to communicate with each other, are considered to be present at a meeting and able to participate in decision-making.
 - c) Voting is by a show of hands, unless the members otherwise decide.
 - d) Voting by proxy is not permitted.

Part VI - Borrowing

1. In order to carry out the purposes of the Society, the Coordinating Collective may, on behalf of and in the name of the Society raise or secure the payment or repayment of money in the manner they decide.
2. No debenture shall be issued without the sanction of a special resolution.

Part VII - Financial Statements

1. All financial records shall be maintained in accordance with the Society Act.
2. At each Annual General meeting, the Society shall appoint an auditor to hold office until the next Annual General meeting. If at that meeting an appointment is not made, the auditor in office continues until a successor is appointed.
 - At the AGM in 2009 it was passed by consensus to have Ron Rasmussen to be the financial reviewer for the year.
3. No staff or member of the Society shall be auditor.
4. The Coordinating Collective may fill a vacancy in the office of the auditor created by resignation, death or otherwise.
5. The auditor will be informed promptly in writing of the appointment.
6. Financial records and other relevant records will be reviewed at the end of the fiscal year by the auditor and year end financial statements will be prepared by the auditor and presented to the Coordinating Collective for approval prior to being presented to the Annual General meeting.
7. The reviewed financial statements that have been approved by the Coordinating Collective shall be presented at the Annual General meeting for acceptance by the general membership.

Part VIII - Notice to Members

1. A notice may be given to a member, either personally or by mail to her at her mailing address or by facsimile, if a member provides a facsimile number or by electronic mail if a member provides an electronic address for the purpose of receiving notices.

Part IX - Amendment to Bylaws or the Constitution

1. The Constitution or Bylaws may be amended or new bylaws introduced at the Annual General meeting of the Society by special resolution.
2. Notice to amend the Constitution or any By-law or to introduce a new By-Law shall be given in writing to the Coordinating Collective sufficiently in advance of the date of the Annual General meeting in order that they can be circulated to the members 14 (fourteen) days in advance of the Annual General meeting.
3. The special resolution is effective on the date of its acceptance by the registrar as being in compliance with this Act or, if the special resolution is accepted by the registrar and a later date is specified in the special resolution, on that later date.

(This Constitution was revised and ratified at the AGM in September, 2003)