

Chair's Report 2021

At last year's AGM, I opened with the statement, "We have just completed what was very likely, to say the least, the most unusual 12-month period in the life of Nelson at its Best (and SPAN)."

Well ...ditto on that for these last 12 months!

But we certainly have adapted to an online environment to conduct our work, and we have continued to do valuable work in the community, despite the limitations imposed by the pandemic.

And we continue to do so with very minimal resources, a tribute to everyone involved

...and an indication that there is an important role for this organization.

A summary list of our activities and accomplishments Oct 2020 - Oct 2021

- Under leadership of Marjie and Rona, we recruited and launched a very diverse and talented *Together Nelson* 'Leadership Round Table' in November, with a series of public consultations in the winter/spring, leading to the first communication to the community about three key priorities fall 2021.
 - We now have the beginnings of what will evolve into the ongoing development and implementation of a community-led poverty reduction strategy.
- Virtual Reverse All-Candidates Civic By-Election Forum February 11, our first venture into an exclusively Zoom event with NPL.
- Nelson at its Best Coop Radio program Oct-Apr, with 11 one-hour biweekly programs on 11 topics related to community health, well-being and rights.
 - ...pretty time intensive, relatively limited audience
 - ...perhaps doing more op eds, letters, releases
- Virtual federal election forum Sept 15 in partnership with the **Nelson and District Chamber of Commerce** and **Nelson Public Library**.

Coalition Work

- The just-mentioned election forum w/ N&D Chamber of Commerce

- Took part in NAEDP Covid Recovery economic strategy session just last week.
- Continued participation in development and evolution of *Intercultural Kootenays* as a stand-alone organization. www.inetrulturalkootenays.com
- Continued participation in Phase II of NEST Lab as a Convening Partner, which had 22 participants. A communications strategy is underway this Fall to let the community know about the specific prototype projects that have emerged. Discussing where we could find some funding for Phase III + ongoing operation www.nestlabnelson.com

THE YEAR AHEAD Oct 2021-Oct 2022

Citizen Participation with Municipal Government

- 2nd Council Check-in ...hopefully in November 2021
- 'Candi-Dating' Municipal Election Oct 2022
 - The municipal realm should, in my opinion, be our electoral focus
 - Best realm in which to promote dialogue and engagement
 - Fed + Prov ...perhaps collaborative efforts only ...if we have resources
- Ongoing work of *Together Nelson* poverty reduction strategy work ...communication to community around 3 action teams, as well as work to obtain next level of funding + more community participation
- Hopefully, we will be able to help inform the ongoing NAEDP covid recovery strategic planning, being a voice advocating more awareness of and response to the broader community social recovery aspects.
- Current 2019-22 Strategic Plan is coming to an end.
 - Need to revisit our focus and priorities? ...or continue in current direction?
- But **MOST IMPORTANTLY** I feel, we need to elevate the goal of “bringing more people to our table” to being a **critical priority** for *Nelson at its Best*
 - I am worried about us surviving & thriving, beyond the poverty focus
 - Perhaps the next phase of *Together Nelson* work will contribute to this

Related to this I took over as Board Chair in October 2016, so I have just finished my 5th year as Board Chair. There is still a lot of work that *Nelson at its Best* can and needs to do, and I want to be a part of it. However, I think it's important for leadership to revolve, evolve and change ...and after five years, it is a good time for someone else to take on this role. So I see 2021-22 as my last year as Board Chair ...As a transition, I am very much hoping to have a **co-Chair** this year.

In closing, I want to express my heartfelt **thanks to many people:**

- The relatively small group, 10-12 people, who make it all happen at this table and with the various working groups that do the project work
- Marjie Lesko for the extraordinary work she has done with *Together Nelson*, getting this critical evolution of our poverty work firmly underway...well above and beyond the official contract for the position
- Rona Park for NOT retiring from Nelson at its Best along with Nelson Community Services ...your work with *Together Nelson* and the larger Nelson at its Best has been so critical
- All the members of the *Together Nelson* Leadership Roundtable ...Kady here
- Tracey, Heather and NPL for being such an important part of our two Zoom election forum (and soon Council Check-in) events this year. We quite literally could not have done it without you.
- Related to this, much thanks to Kim for being not only on the working groups but also the host of the two forum events.
- And to all the other working group members who helped plan and run projects ...Sean, Kady, Anni + Kim Coop Radio,

Respectfully submitted, George Chandler, Board Chair