



VANCOUVER ISLAND REGION RESTORATIVE JUSTICE ASSOCIATION

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www.acjs.ca/virrja

*Advancing Restorative Justice on Vancouver Island, Sunshine Coast and
all Gulf Islands.*

**VIRRJA GENERAL MEETING Zoom Meeting
19 APRIL 2021 10.00 AM – 12 NOON**

MINUTES

WELCOME: Director Sue Saunders welcomed everyone to the meeting

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND OPENING ROUND DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION HOLD COMMUNITY DIALOGUES?

22 people in attendance representing 11 programs, one independent practitioner, ED OF RJABC and RCMP E-Division RJ coordinator. Apologies from Vanessa Ramsdale South Island Wellness Society, Jane Osborne RJ Vic, Caryl Wylie Arrowsmith CJ.

Saanich Peninsula Restorative Justice: Sue Saunders, Hayley McNabb

qathet Community Justice: Jane Waterman

Comox Valley Community Justice Centre: Bruce Curtis

Sunshine Coast RJ: Speaker Nancy Denham, Jan Smalley, Donna Schmirler, Sue Spurgeon, Ian Cochran

Campbell River RJ: Kristine Atkinson

Community Circles RJ Ladysmith: Richard Tarnoff, Gerry Kelly, Deanne Wrate

Gold River RJ: Arlene Fehr

Warmland RJ: Carmen Hildebrand

West Coast RJ: Myles Morrison

RCMP BC Division RJ coordinator: Kara Dosanjh

Independent Practitioner: Gail Jewsbury

Salt Spring Island RJ: Darlene Gage

RJ Association of BC: Christianne Paras

RJ Victoria: Jo-Ann Roberts, Nicky Hadwell

HOSTING A COMMUNITY DIALOGUE Nancy Denham, Restorative Justice Program of the Sunshine Coast

“With John, my husband of nearly 50 years, we settled on the Sunshine Coast in 1977. We are Parents of 3 Children and Grandparents of 6.

I have been involved with Restorative Justice Practices since the late 1980s where I trained in Conflict Resolution with the Justice Institute of B.C, which led to training with the Community Justice Forum in the early 1990s. I have been a facilitator ever since.

I retired in 2010 after working for 24 years with the Sunshine Coast School District in the capacity of Special Education Teaching Assistant and Youth & Family Outreach Counsellor. As a Certified Restorative Justice Facilitator, I worked extensively within the Schools, as well as with the RJPS.

In 2010, after being at the first National Truth and Reconciliation Event, I committed myself to the Journey toward Reconciliation facilitating Reconciliation Circles, the KAIROS Blanket Exercise, and The Anglican Church Mapping Exercise extensively here on the Coast and in other places in BC.

Since 2017, I have been Trainer and Mentor for Peacemaking Circle Keepers and I am currently serving on the Board of the Restorative Justice Program of the Sunshine Coast. As well, I am a founding member of the syiyaya (family & friends) Reconciliation Movement, working on Reconciliation projects within the Shishálh First Nations swiya (homelands). “

Nancy was ably assisted by Ian Cochran with the technical details and both have kindly agreed to share their presentation. Their contact details are on the last page of the presentation and they welcome questions. We also recorded the meeting with the permission of everyone there. If you wish to access the recording please send your request to virrja@ymail.com



Nancy Denham Presentation.pdf

A couple of points that really stood out for me from Nancy's presentation:

- Wisdom is something you develop. Take the bit and go for it
- The local MLA participated in a dialogue circle and had never before been in one place where she listened to so many of her constituents
- Trust the circle process
- Every community has issues – take leadership through RJ
- A comment made “I would never have listened to a person like that before” breaking down the “them and us”
- Dialogue circles give space to listen/express/see/hear
- People will keep yelling until they believe they have been heard
- Don't get trapped into being the expert. You are making space for conversation and express of views
- A bumper sticker “Listening before positioning”

NOTES:

Cpl. Kara Dosanjh has created a script for RCMP members to use to see if the case should be referred to RJ. They are moving away from “victim and offender” labels in the script.

RJABC – Christianne reported they are working on MOUs with the prosecution service. Looking to bring programs together every 3 month to discuss trends etc. She feels there is excitement and growth in RJ.

A poll was held at the end of the meeting. 93% found the topic useful for their program, 86% felt their program would benefit from more information on this topic and 64% would like to join a conversation group on this topic to learn more.

CLOSING ROUND Meeting finished at 12 noon

NEXT MEETING 21 JUNE 2021 VIA ZOOM.