

COMMUNITY MEMBERS MEETING NOTES

Date: July 27, 2026

Time: 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Location: [Zoom](#)

Chair: TBD

Notes: Bree Odd

Land Acknowledgement

The Social Planning Council of Williams Lake and Area would like to acknowledge this meeting is taking place on the traditional unceded territory of the Secwepemc Nation and the T'exelcenc people.

Review & Approve Agenda for July 27, 2026

Member Introductions: Share your name and the organization you represent.

Guest Speaker(s):

Anna Chubata, Program Supervisor for the Community Based Employment Services (CBES), with WorkBC Centre.

- Introduced Next Mile, a low-barrier employment program launched in May 2026 and serving Williams Lake and Quesnel.
- Program supports adults facing multiple barriers to employment, including unstable housing, mental-health or substance-use challenges, transportation barriers, limited work experience, and social isolation.
- Services include outreach, peer support, short-term training and certifications, referrals, and assistance with some identification and transportation-related costs.
- A work-experience partnership with the Salvation Army launched July 20, offering opportunities in the thrift store, kitchen, and food bank.
- Coordination is underway with WorkBC, CMHA, Salvation Army, and other community organizations to strengthen referral pathways and reduce duplication.
- Open house planned for September 16, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Silvia Dubray, Community Well-Being & Safety Coordinator with the City of Williams Lake.

- Survey had received 196 responses and was scheduled to close July 31; results will support Mayor and Council advocacy at UBCM in September.
- Key concerns included open drug use, homelessness, downtown safety, crime, lack of mental-health/addiction/housing supports, policing concerns, and court-system frustrations.
- Discussion included the need for treatment and housing resources, a youth shelter, improved lighting and environmental design, and stronger communication between agencies.
- Positive changes noted included increased downtown activity, bike/foot patrols and security, the clean team, and environmental-design improvements.
- Attendees were encouraged to complete and share the survey.

Lightning Round - Share an Organizational Update, a Challenge, or a Success

Hannah Diether - Central Interior Rural Division of Family Practice

- Two physicians are leaving Atwood Clinic in the fall.
- Up to four international physicians and one nurse practitioner are anticipated, subject to licensing and recruitment processes.
- Residents without a family doctor were encouraged to register with the Health Connect Registry.
- A respiratory therapist is available through the Primary Care Hub by referral.

Mike Franklin - Foundry Williams Lake / Child Development Centre

- Summer drop-in traffic is lower as expected, while counselling, nursing, and physician bookings remain steady or slightly increased.
- Planning is underway for fall school outreach and expansion into 100 Mile House.
- Outreach and peer-support services in 100 Mile House are expected to begin before the permanent facility opens.

Sarah Jackman - Salvation Army Williams Lake

- Demand for drop-in services and food hampers has increased while revenue and funding have decreased.
- Staffing and volunteer shortages remain a significant challenge.
- A United Way-funded program provides paid opportunities for eligible individuals receiving disability or income assistance.
- WorkBC and SPC offered to help share volunteer and program information.

Krista - BGC Williams Lake

- The summer recreation program for ages 11-16 is full and running well.
- Mountain biking programming returns in September.
- The annual Street Party is August 26; community organizations may participate with information tables.
- Haunted House planning is underway.

Sherry - Downtown Williams Lake

- The Clean Team continues operating; N95 masks were available through the Downtown Williams Lake office during smoky conditions.
- Art Walk runs August 7-September 9.
- Scaffolding timing at the WorkBC/CCPL building was to be confirmed before the Art Walk opening.

Carla Bullinger - Cariboo Chilcotin Partners for Literacy (CCPL)

- CCPL is operating reduced summer hours.
- Financial literacy coaching and settlement-worker appointments remain available.

Rhea - BC Schizophrenia Society

- Family-focused support is available for people with a loved one experiencing serious mental illness.
- Services include one-to-one support, a monthly family support group, and education presentations.
- Self-referral is available.

Shannon Thom - WorkBC

- Summer remains quieter for job seekers, with client numbers beginning to increase.
- September is Disability Employment Month; WorkBC is planning an open house and welcomes community organizations to participate.

Bree Odd - Social Planning Council / Thrive

- The poverty reduction work is returning to the name Thrive as the Revive Thrive re-engagement phase is complete.
- A community forum was tentatively planned for October 26; logistics, including childminding, were still being explored.
- SPC continues to support the Communities Ending Poverty Leadership Table and TRU/post-secondary work.
- The Food Hub is on summer hiatus; United Way funding has been received.
- No Community Meeting or newsletter is planned for August; urgent items can continue to be shared through SPC social media.

Possible Connections/Gaps in Services/Alignments

- Next Mile CBES, WorkBC, CMHA, and Salvation Army are actively coordinating referral pathways, creating an opportunity to reduce duplication and help clients move more easily between employment and community supports.
- Community safety concerns are closely connected to housing, mental-health and addiction services, youth shelter needs, policing, and the design and use of public spaces.
- Lighting, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, shelter communication, Clean Team work, and increased downtown activity show opportunities for coordinated practical approaches alongside longer-term system responses.
- Employment, volunteer, and work-experience opportunities across Next Mile, Salvation Army, WorkBC, BGC, and community organizations can support pathways to participation and employment.
- Foundry, BGC, BC Schizophrenia Society, and other partners provide complementary youth, young-adult, family, and mental-health supports, though the lack of a youth shelter remains a significant gap.
- Physician turnover and recruitment pressures remain connected to broader community stability, access to care, and poverty-reduction efforts.

Actions / Next Steps

- Anna Chubata to confirm the second Next Mile outreach worker and continue connecting with community partners.
- Community Safety Survey to remain open until July 31; attendees encouraged to complete and share it.
- Sylvia Siebert-Dubray to compile survey findings for Mayor and Council ahead of UBCM.
- Shannon Tom to confirm scaffolding timing with the building contractor and continue planning the WorkBC Disability Employment Month open house.
- Salvation Army to send volunteer and paid-program information to WorkBC, SPC, and BC Schizophrenia Society for sharing.
- SPC to circulate the Community Safety Survey information and share Salvation Army volunteer/program information.

- Organizations interested in the BGC Street Party or WorkBC Disability Employment Month open house to connect directly with the respective organizers.
- SPC to continue planning for the fall community forum.

No Community Meeting will be held in August.

Meeting Adjourned: