

2022 AGM Chair of the Board of Directors' Report

The engine that runs in the background of the ANKORS organization

Every year that I have been on the Board of Directors, it seems like the same observation can be made – how amazing the staff are with developing new approaches to perennial (and increasingly intense) challenges; the skillful and heart-filled guidance provided by ANKORS' Executive Director, Cheryl Dowden; the delight of funders stepping forward to increase the number of programs addressing the challenges that vulnerable people who use drugs and are at risk of blood borne pathogens face.

And it is once again that I sing these praises with genuine respect and regard. ANKORS is truly an amazing organization.

The role of the Board of Directors may seem pale in comparison to the activities of the staff, yet each person on the Board has a significant role to play with supporting, reviewing, and ensuring that the work of ANKORS can go forward in the best manner.

In the past year, ANKORS has had an amazing opportunity to grow one of its programs and provide stability for the participants with the purchase of a building to house the program. The West Houston House purchase to ground the Kootenay Boundary Adult Supported Recovery Program in a permanent location has been a brilliant commitment to ensuring the future of a successful service.

I was delighted to be picked by Cheryl Dowden to work on securing the purchase as well as arranging for the necessary studies that would inform us as to the needs of the building for repairs. And now I can laugh as to how simple as task it seemed at the time!

The process of being able to make the purchase has been convoluted and time consuming. What seemed like a slam-dunk fifteen months ago took a year to solidify with arranging funding through BC Housing for the purchase, renovations, and repairs.

The members of the Board of Directors were so amazing in their support and response to the urgency and timing of significant motions that needed to be made and voted on to accomplish this purchase. Using electronic means as needed, with signatures recorded to validate each vote, this Board set new standards for functioning as a wide-flung organization. Kudos to you all!

As we proceeded in the manoeuvres and negotiations, it became obvious to me that while initially I could use my identifiable role as Chair of the Board to establish the authority to be making requests for information, that there would be a time that I would need to step down as Chair to avoid any perception of conflict of interest, as I was subsequently hired as a consultant to manage the project.

The transition was made in early March through Michelle Shewell's generous wiliness to step into the role of Chair part way through the year. After nearly ten years as Board Chair, it has been a pleasure for me to step aside and experience how someone else fulfills that role. I so enjoy the fresh approach Michelle brings to the position. When this project is completed, I will return to participate in the Board once again.

Warm regards, Nora Lilligren, former Board Chair, June 2010 – March 2022