

COQUITLAM FOUNDATION

PRESENTATION TO COQUITLAM COUNCIL 2nd draft

October 20, 2008

Good evening and thank you for allowing me to address you. I'm Gerri Wallis, vice-chair of the Coquitlam Foundation. Joining me from the Foundation board tonight are [other board members] and, of course, Maxine Wilson, who, as Mayor of Coquitlam, is one of three statutory members of the board of directors. We are here tonight because it is our pleasure to tell council—and, through council, the citizens of Coquitlam—about the Foundation. We have a great story to share!

The Coquitlam Foundation is a federally registered charity, whose purpose is to act as a catalyst and resource for philanthropy throughout our community. In fact, November 15th—a day that already figures prominently on many of our personal calendars because of the municipal election—is National Philanthropy Day.

To raise awareness about this important day, The Coquitlam Foundation is working with four other Community Foundations from the North Fraser region. We've embarked on a variety of promotional events, including a series of newspaper advertisements, to help our communities better appreciate the merits of philanthropy. As the National Philanthropy Day's slogan says, we believe we can "Change the world with a giving heart."

This is a conviction that has motivated the Coquitlam Foundation since we were launched in 1992. Indeed, for the past 16 years now, the Foundation has been dedicated to improving the quality of life in the community by responding to the unmet needs of residents by attracting, managing and distributing contributions.

Guided by a 12-person volunteer board, the Coquitlam Foundation is a vehicle for caring citizens who want to provide a benefit to our community in perpetuity.

And it really works! The Foundation has distributed some 475-thousand-dollars to charitable organizations and individuals since 1992. As well, it currently manages funds in excess of 1.4-million-dollars. Most recently, we distributed 91-thousand-dollars in grants and bursaries in our last fiscal year.

Grant recipients include groups ranging from the Dogwood Dragon Boat Team and the B.C. Wheelchair Basketball Society to the PoCoMo Youth Services Society and the Children of the Streets Society. As the foundation grows, we look forward to meeting more of the needs of Coquitlam.

So, where does this money come from? The Foundation receives funds from a variety of sources: a direct-access gaming grant from the provincial government; corporate and individual donors; community organizations with which it partners; and even other community Foundations, such as the Vancouver Foundation.

In addition, the Coquitlam Foundation holds an annual fundraising event. This past year, it was a “Diamonds and Denim” evening at the Red Robinson Theatre. The gala, which featured a silent auction followed by a concert by Tanya Tucker, raised funds to the tune of over 14-thousand-dollars.

We are very grateful, not only to everyone who volunteers to make events such as these so successful, but also—of course—to all the individuals, groups and corporations for their attendance and financial support. The Coquitlam Foundation thanks you all!

The foundation also receives interest income on the capital it invests. And finally, this year—for the first time—we were a partner in the fourteenth annual Peter Legge Charity Golf Classic, a relationship that benefited us by the score of 23-thousand-dollars.

And speaking of Peter Legge, he’s now our honorary chairperson and, as such, has played a leading role, along with Mayor Wilson, in our special Kickstart fundraising campaign we are just now wrapping up. Once again, we really must express our deepest gratitude to all the time and inspiration these two community leaders gave to ensure the success of the Kickstart Campaign.

I am extremely pleased to report that the campaign total now stands at 105-thousand-dollars, thanks to the generosity of several companies, including:

The Onni Group of Companies;
Mosaic Homes;
The Intergulf Group of Companies;
The Beedie Group;
Unimet Investments Ltd;
Wesbild Holdings Limited;
Polygon Homes Ltd.;
Bosa Properties Inc.;
Morguard Investments Ltd.;
BFW Developments Ltd.;
Progressive Construction;
Wesgroup Properties;
and Park Lane Homes Ltd..

They all deserve a very special thanks!

Because of the success of the Kickstart Campaign, I can now report that the Coquitlam Foundation is able to move up, into a new stage of its development, one that will bring untold benefit to the community, both now and well into the future.

The big news is that we are now in the position to hire our first-ever staff employee—an Executive Director. Starting as a half-time position, the Executive Director will work to

elevate the Foundation—building lasting relationships with community leaders and groups to enable us to both raise and disburse additional funds.

Happily, we have found just the right person for the job. She is a long-time Coquitlam resident, who is well-known for her great work with the Coquitlam School District. Starting November first, Laurel Lawson will be our new Executive Director.

So it's been quite a year for the Coquitlam Foundation. We've gone through an extensive rebranding process that has given us a smart new look and presence. We've expanded our fund-raising and –granting activities. We've brought new and exciting members onto our board. And we've hired an executive director!

On behalf of the Coquitlam Foundation, thank you all for allowing me to share this good news with you tonight!

Written by Terry O'Neill