

Non-profit survey 2007

Acknowledgements

The Town of Banff (TOB)- Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) department would like to thank the many Banff nonprofits that completed the survey or allowed us to interview them. Without their cooperation, we would have nothing to report.

Introduction

Banff FCSS currently provides support services to the many non-profit organizations in the community. In order to identify more efficient and effective ways to support these organizations, a survey and interviews were undertaken as part of a formal assessment process. The survey/interviews asked non-profit organizations about their current capacity, their needs, sustainability and challenges.

Eighty-eight surveys were sent to Banff non-profit organizations and forty-four surveys were returned. Sixteen of these organizations also provided personal interviews. Of the organizations surveyed:

- ❖ 21 are registered non-profits,
- ❖ 12 are registered charities,
- ❖ 1 is a Community Association,
- ❖ 10 were neither of the above
- ❖ 5 didn't know their status.

The analysis of the data collected through the survey and more detailed interviews, assisted in determining the strengths, issues and challenges occurring in the voluntary sector. And through this analysis, provide insight to the FCSS department into how they may be able to better support these groups.

The information collected provides a “snapshot in time” of the Banff non-profit community.

Key Findings

Financial Resource Capacity

- securing financial resources posed at least a minor challenge to the majority of Banff non-profits
- 66% stated having sufficient funds; 15 organizations reported needing more funds
- funding needs ranged from capital dollars for equipment and space to operational funds for hiring staff or increasing wages
- expanding the donor base, obtaining funding or other resources, securing foundation or corporate grant support and building financial stability are issues for most of the Banff non-profits.

Human Resource Capacity

- 55% of the respondents reported challenges with recruiting, training and retention of staff and volunteers.

- Competition with the for-profit community for staff was identified as an issue.
- Volunteers are involved to some degree in most of the organizations (only 4 do not utilize volunteers). 16 organizations are 100% volunteer run.
- Organizations that are 100% volunteer run are mostly support organizations (i.e. grief support group), sport organizations (without paid coaching staff) and service clubs.
- Volunteer “burnout” was identified as an issue related to managing multiple roles including: managing programs, membership on the Board and fund-raising.

Informational Technology Capacity

- 47.5 % reported minor challenges with creating a comprehensive and interactive website, upgrading computers to support new software, and training staff and volunteers in software applications

Operations and Governance Capacity

- 46% of the organizations in Banff have well-developed policies and procedures in place to effectively manage their organizations
- 32% stated having some minor challenges in developing and maintaining effective policies and procedures.
- 21.6% of organizations have major challenges or no policies or procedures in place.

Not-for-profit HUB

- The Non-Profit Community HUB provides free office and meeting space to non-profit groups. 7 organizations (in addition to those who have already applied) are interested in using the Community Non-Profit HUB. The majority of these organizations are sport organizations who need space to meet and for their coaches to do administrative work.

Sufficient Physical Facilities

- 56.8% of organizations felt they had adequate “physical facilities”
- 43.2% do not have adequate “physical facilities”. The vast majority of these are sport organizations who require more space in order to operate.
- space issues included the need for more square footage, storage, gym space, better fields, meeting and storage space.

Sufficient Work Tools

- More than half of the organizations felt they had sufficient work tools (training resources, adequate software, internet access, computers).
- organizations in need of tools were deficient in software, computers, faxes, copiers and phones and IT support
- 7 organizations were willing to share resources, these tools included sewing machines, fax and photocopy machines.
- Challenges identified with sharing were the development of arrangements for training in use of equipment, operating costs, maintenance and repairs.

Support Service, Advice and Resources

- 35% of the organizations accessed FCSS for support both formal and informal.
- 35% were aware of the services FCSS offered
- 30% were not aware of the services available.
- fund development assistance and access to the grant database were the most accessed services
- topics the organizations are most interested in are financial i.e. fund development, grant writing, and corporate sponsorship.
- 39% preferred training via workshops, 26% via lunch and learn and 11% through website resources, written guides/short briefing documents and mentorship.
- 73% of organizations were interested in receiving regular e-mails or newsletters related to non-profit management.
- Consultation services requested were related to IT and web development support.
- interest in networking opportunities was related to social opportunities (37%) or opportunities to meet with similar groups (35%). 17% were not interested in networking.

Organizational Strengths

- “people”, whether they are volunteers, staff or membership are the number one strength. The other major strength is organization specific services/programs.

Organizational Challenges

- Training and retention of volunteers and staff
- adequate funding
- adequate space
- The organizations interested in obtaining non-profit status are the Bow Valley Basketball League, Banff Minor Soccer and the Bow Valley Soccer League. Organizations seeking charitable status are Wildrose Community Connections, Banff Volunteer Centre, AIDS Bow Valley and Bow Valley Self Help Grief Support Group.

Recommendations

Based upon the data that was collected from the non-profit groups, the following recommendations for action were developed:

- market/communicate fundraising opportunities, funding sources and grant writing support services to the non-profit community.
- offer a sport specific funding workshop.
- identify potential volunteer resources external to the community.
- work with businesses to create volunteer programs within their organizations as part of an incentive plan.
- research the possibility of a group employee benefits plan for non-profits in the Bow Valley for full and part-time staff.
- create a non-profit contact list for the TOB website.

- host an annual meeting of the non-profit community in Banff to discuss challenges and opportunities.
- develop and distribute non-profit management information.
- update Town Council on the challenges and opportunities for non-profits in Banff.
- provide templates and share existing policies and procedures with organizations looking to develop or alter their policies and procedures.
- provide consultant services to those most in need- work with organizations to define their needs and then search out the expertise to support their needs.
- work with organizations seeking non-profit society status or charitable status to assist with application. Develop a workshop on how/why to obtaining status.
- develop training opportunities for non profits based on the top areas identified: fund development/grant writing, corporate sponsorship, revenue generation, marketing and communications, leadership training, staff recruitment and retention, policy and procedure development, dealing with the media, board development and governance, obtaining charitable/non-profit society status, succession plan development
- review possibilities within the new recreation centre and the HUB for non-profit meeting spaces.
- identify strategies for shared IT support for non-profit organizations.

Conclusions

The non-profit organizations of Banff are vital to the community. These organizations provide a myriad of services, opportunities and support systems that thread the community together and are essential for a vibrant and healthy Banff. Through the information gathered via the non-profit survey and interviews, Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) has been able to identify some of the key issues affecting our non-profit agencies and create strategies to support non-profits. The goal of these strategies will be to ultimately increase the capacity of our many non-profit organizations.